Abe Lincoln and the First International

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NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

February 13, 1940

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by Joseph Starobin

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Bulletin from Three Fronts
by Major Allen Johnson

Carl Sandburg's Lincoln
reviewed by Samuel Sillen

CARTOONS BY GROPPER, GARDNER REA, RICHTER, OTHERS

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Between Ourselves

GEORGE SELDES, whose series on Finland and the press was concluded in last week's NM, sends us the following postscript:

"An editor of one of the largest newspapers in America, in one of the five largest cities of our country —I cannot further identify him at present—has admitted privately that as a result of his investigation he is convinced that one of the biggest Associated Press and United Press stories out of Finland is a fake.

"This story claimed that the Finns had penetrated Russian territory and cut the Murmansk railroad. It appeared first on December 5: 'Finnish bombers today paralyzed northward movements of Russian reinforcements by bombing and cutting the Leningrad-Murmansk railway . . .'

"On December 18: 'three small groups were said to have penetrated forty to fifty miles into Russian territory, repeatedly interrupting communications on the Leningrad-Murmansk railroad.'

"The biggest headline sensation was dated December 25: 'The Finnish army has invaded Russia.' The first objective was a town on the same railroad. December 29, traffic was paralyzed. December 30, Reuters, the British agency, entered the war of lies. It had a story which our own agencies flashed: 'Murmansk link severed at three points by ski men.'

"By January 6, 'fast-moving patrols of the Finnish army have penetrated seventy-five miles into Soviet territory' and reached the railroad town. This news was 'disclosed in Helsinki,' it was not rumored. January 8, the Murmansk railroad was 'blasted.' January 13, Moscow announced that the railroad had never been hit, blasted, cut, torn, or touched, that 'in reality, the Murmansk railroad has not suspended work for a single minute.' (Of course no American commercial editor believes anything out of the USSR these days.)

"The editor of one of the big papers of America to whom I refer, and who I hope will be brave enough to acknowledge this story and publish it somewhere, decided this series of stories warranted an investigation. He made inquiries through the Associated Press, United Press, and special war correspondents. He discovered that the entire series started with Donald Day, correspondent of the Chicago *Tribune* at Riga, who is now covering the war in Helsinki. After Day had sent it several times, and no paper or news agency in America (besides the *Tribune*) had touched it, the story got back anonymously to Copenhagen.

"Copenhagen is the new lie factory—just as Riga was for the past twenty years—concerning anything about the USSR. But the correspondents in Copenhagen are not entirely to blame; they merely send as rumors or reports the lies in the local press. However, the Copenhagen correspondents laid off the story because they could not confirm it in Helsinki. But when it appeared again and again, they were forced to send it for fear a rival would send it and so scoop them. 'We did not believe it; we ran it to protect ourselves.' That was the concluding word sent to this editor by the men who investigated the fake; and the editor in question ran the story although he also believed it a fake."

They're coming at last, those intimate NM luncheon forums we've been talking about. Only they're going to be Sunday breakfast forums; or is "brunch" the right word, since they'll be held at 12:30? The subject of the first forum will be: "What's Happening to the New Deal?" Two prominent persons will speak and there will be plenty of time for questions from the floor, as well as for food and conversation. The names of the speakers, the exact date, place, etc., will be announced in the next issue.

George Marshall of the American Council on Soviet Relations sends us a correction: "It has been called to my attention that in your editorial comment preceding Shaemas O'Sheel's letter [the open letter to Ferdinand Lundberg which appeared as an article entitled 'The Weasels'] appearing on page 15 of your January 23 issue, you stated that the Open Letter of last August on the Soviet Union, which had more than 400 signers, was issued by the American Council on Soviet Relations. This was not the case. The Open Letter was issued by an independent Initiating Committee. Your mistake was undoubtedly due to the fact that I am a member of both the Council and the Committee, and the letter of the Initiating Committee was issued from my office."

Wellington Roe

Mr. Roe is a veteran of the AEF —has been an actor, ghost writer, advertising man, circus press agent, and midwife for seven mothers during a Florida hurricane. He made and lost a half-million-dollar fortune in real estate during the great Florida boom. His novels include a story of the Kansas Dust Bowl, "The Tree Falls South"; another about industrial New England from 1919 to 1934, "Time Is a Talker"(to be published soon); and a novel concerning the Danbury hatting industry, "Begin No Day." He has contributed before to NM, and says: "What I dread most is that some day I will lose the fine, youthful indignation at injustice, at social maladjustment, at bigotry, and at greed."

Who's Who

JOSEPH STAROBIN is an editorial assistant on NM, specializing in foreign affairs. . . . Major Allen Johnson was an officer of the Fifteenth International Brigade during the Spanish war. . . . Theodore Draper is the author of a book on European affairs which will be published shortly. . . . Modern Age. He is a former foreign editor and foreign correspondent of NM. . . . David Richards has written a number of pamphlets on economic subjects. . . . Harry Slochower is the author of *Three Ways of Modern Man* and a critical study of Thomas Mann. . . . Ed Falkowski has been a contributor to NM since it was a monthly. . . . Alfred J. Brenner is a short story writer.

Flashbacks

HERE'S a lesson in labor history for the present AFL Executive: On Feb. 12, 1889, the up and coming AFL granted a charter to the New York Central Labor Federation, a new group under radical control which had rebelled against conservatives and corrupt influences in the labor movement. . . . An American helped the Roman Republic to come into existence and to defend itself Feb. 8, 1849. This Yankee, a kind of International Brigade member in this early armed struggle for republicanism, was the writer Margaret Fuller. . . . The birthday of Frederick Douglass, militant Negro leader who was born in slavery, is celebrated Feb. 12. Douglass was born in the year 1819.

This Week

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXIV FEBRUARY 13, 1940 NUMBER 8

A Secret Dies Committee

AN EDITORIAL APPEAL

THE witch hunt is on. It is proceeding at full speed but with an up-to-date, 1940 technique. Last week we informed our readers that the "federal authorities are on a fishing expedition." We explained the general nature of the "investigation" of this magazine under way for this past month. We announced that Editors A. B. Magil and Joseph North, Business Manager Carl Bristel, and former Manager George Willner had been subpoenaed to appear before the Federal Grand Jury in Washington.

We respect the tradition regarding Grand Jury proceedings not to reveal the specific questions asked. But since the authorities themselves have divulged certain of their plans to the press, given the names of certain of the witnesses called to Washington, we feel perfectly justified in stating certain conclusions concerning the proceedings.

The Grand Jury before which Editors A. B. Magil and Joseph North were called heard a multitude of questions asked by the assistant district attorneys that had absolutely nothing to do with the case. It is already obvious that the officials conducting the inquiry are not acting in good faith. They are clearly out to ferret information, not to act upon information that former Attorney General Murphy purported to have when he set the process into motion. According to the Washington *Times-Herald* of January 25, Henry O'Donnell, special assistant to the attorney general, said that the findings of the Special Grand Jury will be used as a "clearing house." In effect, this Grand Jury is acting as a secret, star-chamber Dies committee. Ostensibly directed against organizations and individuals whom Mr. Murphy named in the press (in itself an un-American action manifestly aimed to stir up prejudice), it has concerned itself with their personal opinions and impressions, the origin of their parents, the political activities of their wives, with their education, training, and background, and other matters clearly immaterial.

It is truly an inquisition. Of course, the inquiry is inspired by the metamorphosis of New Deal Roosevelt into Reactionary Roosevelt. And since it was inspired by the gentleman from well-mannered Hyde Park, it is all done in a deceptively polite manner, the aim of which is to disarm witnesses and the American public by a phony gentility. The rack and the screw are not used—at least, not yet—and the silk glove covers the mailed fist. But whatever their manner, we know their aim. They are out to stop NEW MASSES and all progressive, anti-war publications, and they do not care how it is done so long as the public can be duped into believing it was done according to the letter of the law. The best Groton training characterizes the proceedings. America's revulsion against the Palmer Red Raid tactics taught the authorities a lesson. The inquisitors, however, are not restrained from asking all manner of questions irrelevant to the stated proceedings—questions charged with significance when one considers that the Department of Justice is seeking to build up an outrageous, spurious case of "conspiracy."

The editors of NEW MASSES and others called to Washington are well aware of the real aims of the inquisition. They will be no comfort to these official violators of the Bill of Rights. A witch hunt is a witch hunt even when Emily Post is on the Grand Jury.

Although Mr. Murphy was all but frank in his charge to his underlings, we will speak boldly and clearly. We are not taken in. We know we are being persecuted today, February 1940, because we stand flatly with all Americans (over 95 percent, according to the Gallup poll) who do not want to be dragooned into war. We have nothing to conceal, never had anything to conceal, and the pages of this magazine are our record. We recommend that the assistant district attorneys and the Grand Jury read the back files of NEW MASSES to see what makes us tick.

But actually, those inspiring the inquisition know the nature of this magazine; they know its backers. They know that our readers are partners in this common venture. They know the existence of this magazine is, and always has been, dependent upon the good will of our readers. Those readers stand four-square behind us in our struggle to keep America from involvement in the European war. The authorities know that.

At this moment we are fighting the battle of suppression on two fronts—both political and financial. NEW MASSES must have the sinews of war to continue its fight for the welfare of America's 130,000,000. Today this magazine is in the second week of its annual financial campaign. This year we call it a Bill of Rights campaign; our readers will understand why.

We explained last week that we will need $5,000 less than last year to see the twelvemonth through. This year our quota is $25,000. We know our readers will stand by us to see that we are not suppressed politically. By the same token they will stand by us to see we are not suppressed financially.

Are we presuming too much to feel you will come to our aid immediately? We need that help today, desperately. Every penny and every dollar sent us today is a vote against war; a vote against the suppression of our—and your—civil rights; a vote against Inquisition. Please fill out the blank on page 26 and send us your vote at once.

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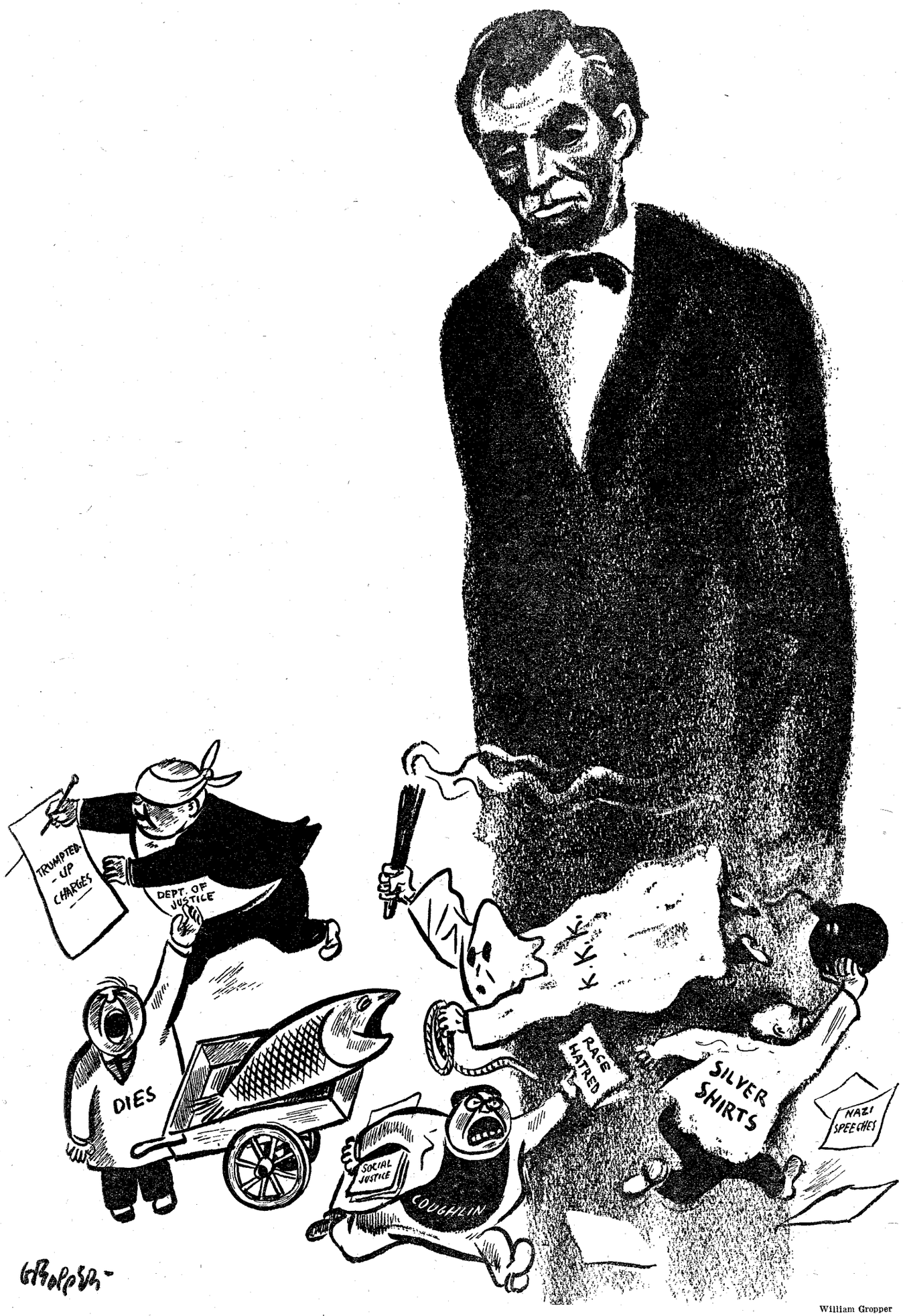

William Gropper

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The United States of Europe

Joseph Starobin examines the "Federal Union" idea. Imperialist war aims and the liberal dilemma. What Lenin said and Lenin's party did.

"EVERYBODY talkin' about heaven ain't goin' there" is the sober observation of the old Negro spiritual. Indeed, everybody's talking about the United States of Europe, but few have any idea of how to get it. Some of the people who do the most talking have given it the least thought. Others who now speculate most freely will be the last to recognize, and the longest to resist, what finally arises in post-war Europe. Bewildered by the issues of the war, the catastrophe in which they have been plunged, the masses sense instinctively that a United States of Europe might solve their troubles. Painfully, they grope toward some new world order: the apocalyptic vision realizable in socialism. But among the upper classes, the idea makes after-dinner conversation. By comparison, the menu of Technocracy was small potatoes. In the recreation of the "better people," Federal Union threatens to replace Moral Re-Armament. It is handicapped by the fact that while the former is distinctly more intellectual, MRA is so much more uplifting.

A SIMPLE QUESTION

What are we fighting for? the people of Britain, France, and Germany ask. This is a simple question, clear and precise. The rulers know the answers, but they dare not give them. Who would rally into battle for war aims such as the rulers will not disclose? Their answers to the simple question are fumbly-mumbly, full of polysyllables and Sunday morning language. In the case of Germany, her aims in this war are more than obvious: she fights for markets, for sources of raw materials, for domination over Europe. More exactly, perhaps, Germany's rulers fight in desperation, for survival as a capitalist power. The Allied statesmen will not admit that their empires are fighting for fundamentally similar reasons. It would be difficult to persuade the French and British peoples that they must die for a larger share in the world market, for treasure and plunder. It would hardly be possible to corral these peoples into war because the policy of appeasement ended in disaster for the appeasers, because the alliance with Soviet Russia was frustrated, because the tory ruling class must seek by force, since friendship failed them, to regain control over Germany, the hub of capitalist Europe.

Mr. Chamberlain prefers to dispense with the discussion altogether. "None of us knows how long this war will last," said he on November 28. "None of us knows in what directions it will develop; none of us knows when it is ended who will be standing by our side, and who will be against us." The tories at this juncture delight in ambiguity: to be precise would give their hand away. It would amount to a political strip-tease; it would disclose criminal designs, disastrous intentions. It would confess to the moral bankruptcy of an entire generation of tory statesmen. For the present, be uncertain; for the future, even more so . . . and that is where His Majesty's Loyal Labor Opposition finds its chance. The government declines for the moment to satisfy the clamor that Mr. Attlee or Mr. Greenwood be given a hand in running the imperialist war. Things are so delicate, so much is at stake. But they may, if they wish, speculate on the war aims, especially what the future shall bring.

Thus, the cost of living has increased by 18 percent in Britain; Sir John Simon is taxing all incomes 37.5 percent; rations on bacon and butter parallel rations in Germany; the Trades Union Council has promised to avoid "labor trouble"; the Labor Party will not contest seats in by-elections; Sir Walter Citrine travels to Helsinki to survey Comrade Tanner's "socialist construction" . . . but Mr. G. D. H. Cole (the man who knew what Marx *really* meant) writes pamphlets explaining British war aims to the people!

AMERICAN ECHOES

The late Senator Borah remarked that America was in this war with everything except its soldiers. While the tories cannot reveal their real war aims to the Britons, they can bubble over to that belligerent neutral, the USA.

The "United States of Europe" idea clippers across the Atlantic. For her private washline in the New York *Herald Tribune,* Miss Dorothy Thompson rinses her linen each Monday morning in the soapsuds of Federal Union. Mr. Clarence Streit, formerly of the New York *Times* beat in Geneva, happily has a plan, his own version of the general idea; it has caught on like miniature golf. *Life* ran a photographic essay on the curio. Even Mr. Thomas Lamont, of J. P. Morgan & Co., has given his seal of approval.

As distinguished from Technocracy, which liberals had figured out to the very last erg, this Federal Union idea is best at its vaguest. But the uncertainty of it all alarms the editors of the *New Republic.* They admit in their issue of January 8 "that the idea needs something more than statement and lip service if it is ever to be fulfilled in reality. Simply drumming up enthusiasm for European or world unity," they declare, "will not do, unless it is accompanied by careful forethought as to how unity is to be achieved and how operated."

So they feel urged to particularize the idea, to work out the details (since no one else will). They will blueprint the future, as a matter of public service, for the archives!

BEEN HEARD BEFORE

The idea itself presents nothing new. Lest we forget, our own Woodrow Wilson proposed a League of Nations, which came to an unfortunate demise, as you may recall. Mr. Hitler claims precedent for the same idea in *Lebensraum.* In his January 30 speech, he mocked Mr. Chamberlain's new Europe as simply "old stuff." The loyal sons of the Mikado may likewise claim preference. They have something they call a "New Order in Asia."

In all the wordy discussion, no one has paused to recall what a modest man named Lenin had to say of the matter. Lenin, after all, was not without some influence on world affairs. It so happens that in the town of Berne, Switzerland, a conference of the exiled sections of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party was convened March 12-17, 1915. This conference revised and ratified a resolution of the Central Committee of Lenin's party of the previous October, which had characterized the First World War as imperialist. In that resolution was also contained an appeal for the formation of a republican United States of Europe. This slogan was strongly favored at the time by none other than Leon Trotsky. Within Bolshevik ranks, it had the support of Bukharin. Lenin was greatly dissatisfied with the slogan and in his report of the conference declares: "on the question of the United States of Europe, the discussion took a one-sidedly political turn, and it was decided to postpone the question pending a discussion of the economic side of it in the press." On August 23, 1915, Lenin published a definitive, by now classic treatment, of the "United States of Europe" slogan.

It is Lenin's approach to the question which is most valuable for us even today. He says:

> But while the United States of Europe slogan, raised in connection with revolutionary overthrow of the three most reactionary monarchies in Europe, headed by Russia, is quite invulnerable as a political slogan, the important question of its economic content and meaning still remains. From the point of view of the economic conditions of imperialism, i.e., capital exports, and the partition of the world among the "progressive" and "civilized" colonial powers, the United States of Europe is either impossible or reactionary under capitalism.

Observe his method of inquiry. It is factual, specific, concrete, analytical in terms of the conditions of the time. "After repeated debates at the conference of the sections of

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the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, and after the conference," he says, "the editors of the central organ have come to the conclusion that the United States of Europe slogan is incorrect."

Have the conditions of 1915 changed with respect to the economic systems of the great, "progressive," "civilized" powers? The systems are weaker, but their essential character remains. What, then, can this slogan mean without a revolutionary revision of the social relations now obtaining in capitalist Europe?

First, as to the concept of federation. At this moment, the British empire considers itself a commonwealth of nations, a federation. That fact of itself has hardly brought the millennium, and gives no indication of so doing. Indeed, no one can be impressed with the stability or even unity of this classic federation. Canada and Australia, as developing capitalist states, are already on the lookout for their own markets. They flirt quite openly with the United States and their favors are reciprocated, to the dismay of the imperial center. In 1931-32, the centrifugal forces within the empire were so marked that only by tariff preferences, devaluation of the pound sterling, and a concerted assault upon the trade positions of imperialist rivals could empire unity survive. The Union of South Africa entered this war by the narrow vote of eighty to sixty-six. Only last week, its minority leader called for peace. Nor do the peoples of India consider that "federal union" in the British Commonwealth has mitigated colonial exploitation one bit. One may also demur as to the extent and integrity of their democracy.

DOMINION OF FRANCE

Liberals have hailed the recent Anglo-French economic union as a step toward a federated Europe. In both England and France, the union was greeted as permanent. Yet what is it really? It is an expression of the common weakness of both economies: more or less officially, France becomes another dominion in the British empire. Her currency will be bolstered by the English pound, something like the lame supporting the blind. British labor already fears that its standards will thereby be reduced to the level of the French. So far from presaging peace, the economic accord is a technique of warfare against the trade positions of both Germany and the United States. It heralds a more intensive exploitation of the colonial empire; there is nothing millennial in that.

Let us venture to the other side of the Rhine. A federated Europe would have to include Germany. Germany is the industrial heart of the continent. Yet Robert Dell, outstanding liberal in this country and abroad, writing in the *Nation* for December 23, considers that "the fundamental error of the peace treaties of 1919 was that they broke up Austro-Hungary and left Germany intact. . . . We must now reverse the process of 1919 by restoring Austria and breaking up Germany." This is the prevailing view in France. By force, if the French have it their way, not only will Czechoslovakia and Poland be "liberated," but Germany shall be divided into its pre-natal parts: Saxony, Prussia, Bavaria, Suabia, the Rhineland, etc. Then what happens? Is this atomized Germany to be invited into the federation of free nations? The very notion gives the scheme away. The gentlemen of Paris so little believe that a "United States of Europe" would assuage their mutual conflicts that they cannot bear the thought of living together with a strong, unified Germany. If after Hitler's downfall, this is the cure-all, why need Federal Union depend on the size of Germany, since all men will be as brothers?

Take the problem of the small nations. Federal Union shall be their resurrection and safeguard. Yet obviously, their standard of living depends on industrialization. The guarantee of their liberty lies in their economic wellbeing. But if, under capitalism, each one of these nations succeeds in self-industrialization, would that not impel them all to a frantic search for raw materials, for markets, for *Lebensraum?* Would not this mutual struggle of unequally developed industrial systems lead to autarchy, the erection of tariff barriers, the licensing of imports, the management of currencies, the death of free trade? That is precisely what Federal Union is supposed to eliminate.

WHY NOT NOW?

But if it is proposed that markets be shared and raw materials divided, the inference is that the "have" nations are ready to yield their privileges, pool their colonies, abandon imperialism. Indeed? Why did they not do as much before the war broke, before the "United States of Europe" became fashionable? What keeps them today from calling the war quits, dividing their materials and markets with Germany? Who doubts but what even Hitler might return Czechoslovakia and Poland (except that part which is not Germany's to return) in exchange for this favor?

Soriano

Assume such troublesome details settled, where would the colonial peoples come in? Would not these peoples, an overwhelming majority of the living beings on earth, protest the exchange of a federation of masters for the individual master? Would not their own efforts at industrialization be repressed by the combined efforts of several imperialisms? Or is it being suggested that the colonial peoples will be admitted to the United States of Europe on an equal basis? Really?

EUROPE VS. AMERICA

In his discussion of 1915, Lenin observed that "on the present economic basis, i.e., under capitalism, the United States of Europe would mean the organization of reaction to retard the more rapid development of America." A sentence previous, he declares: "In comparison with the United States of America, Europe as a whole implies economic stagnation."

In this thought lies the coup de grace to Federal Union. Unless the United States were a part of this world order, we would have a gigantic struggle between two great capitalist federations for supremacy. *Indeed, that is happening already. That is a central fact of our era.* The agreement between the Federation of British Industries and the German industrialists in 1938 was directed against both France and America. All during the twenties an intense competition continued between England and the United States for supremacy in Latin America. Books were written about it; the title of one was *America Conquers Britain.* At this very moment of collaboration between American and British imperialism on the problems of the future of their system in Europe, a bitter struggle for markets has *already developed, already exists between them.* American exports to Latin America jumped by 41.6 percent in 1939. Parliament last week announced the appointment of a special commission to challenge all comers in these same markets. Edward Tomlinson, in the New York *Herald Tribune,* January 17, charges that the breakdown of the Argentine trade pact negotiations can be explained by Anglo-American rivalry. British control of rubber and tin causes American capitalists considerable worry. Significantly, the neutrality belt around South America brought protest from the Allies. Equally significant is the fact that in forbidding the passage of American ships into war zones, Congress *omitted* a ban on American trade with the Allied Far Eastern possessions. Mr. Frank Knox has already proposed the cession of the British West Indies. Mr. Lindbergh suggested the detachment of Canada from the "United States of the British Empire" to the United States of America. Apparently, then, the mere fact that American and British peoples each live in federations (presumably models) does not preclude a universal conflict between them, even though both are inhab-

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Poem

Hearing the sudden cries of Sirs who have been silent,
Hearing the frantic screams of those I do not trust any longer—
I question motives, having watched Spain's great destruction.

The sudden application of the norms that did not matter,
The sudden call to moral arms to honor strategic nations,
The awkward derivations from the Christian teachings.

Too long they have named peoples by the names of their boundaries,
It is too late for me to identify myself with the brave prayers,
The men who feared once so greatly to embroil us,
Whose complacent periscopes explained away the demise of Europe's culture.

ALVIN FOOTE.

ited largely by "white, Christian, democratic, civilized, moral" peoples.

OUR OWN UNITED STATES

Indeed, is our own nation in such a happy state because it is federated? In *Barron's Weekly* for March 10, 1939, the historian James Truslow Adams carries a piece entitled "Balkanizing the United States." He cites with alarm the trade barriers which have grown up among the American states. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics recently prepared a special report called "Barriers to Internal Trade in Farm Products." Everyone knows the intense competition in the dairy industry led to the proposal of coloring Vermont milk red and Rhode Island milk green some time ago. Traveling from Connecticut, Miss Ruth McKenney must not only avoid fines for speeding, but is compelled to pay toll for the privilege of trespassing upon New York roads. Because cigarettes are taxed in Manhattan, wholesale smuggling has developed from New Jersey. Mr. LaGuardia prides himself on the robbery of an airport from Newark, N. J.; he announces his intention of hijacking Hollywood from California.

This point needs qualification, of course. The Federal Union idea supposes the federation of *distinct* nations; capitalism in our country has conquered the whole nation, in fact, brought about its unification. Yet, it is capitalism, floundering into decline and disruption, which creates the centrifugal forces that tear at our "more perfect union." Such tendencies will multiply, may yet become a paramount issue in American affairs. Under capitalism, on all other grounds, the United States is hardly a model for Europe.

If this proposal then of Federal Union reveals itself as half-baked and shallow upon examination, another aspect of it is distinctly sinister. Nowhere in this discussion has mention been made of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. Robert Dell excludes it "until it ceases to be a totalitarian state." Mr. Streit has also not overlooked the question. He says:

> A world government whose principle of freedom not only allows but encourages the United States to retain its republic, and Great Britain its monarchy, could not refuse Russia its Soviet. For Russia to try to promote freedom in its territory by communist experiments is no worse than Sweden trying to do the same by socialist experiments, or others by capitalist experiments—*once Russia guarantees her capitalist and other opposition the same freedom to express and advance their views peacefully as the capitalist democracies guarantee their opposition* [pp. 160-161, *Union Now*. My italics].

This is wonderfully naive, of course. But its idea is ominous. Socialism is not an experiment in the Soviet Union; it's a fact. To refuse the Soviet Union admission to a fraternity of nations because she refuses capitalist "elements" their "peaceful opposition" misses the whole point of what the Soviet Union is. Curiously, the Soviet Union made no such demands upon the capitalist world when she cooperated with them in the League of Nations.

CAPITALIST FRONT

If Mr. Streit and liberals like him are naive, the gentlemen who are running the capitalist world certainly are not. For them, the United States of Europe means the military domination of their systems over Europe. It means a united front against the USSR. It means the holy crusade for "Christian civilization" against socialism. That is what *Lebensraum* meant for Hitler and the world understood it well. But for the armed strength of the Soviet Union, Japan's "new order in Asia" would become "a new order in Siberia." For fourteen years, the League of Nations was an instrument for the isolation of the USSR. Collective security in those days was synonymous with anti-Soviet alignments against which Litvinov's agile diplomacy was principally directed.

In the real world of this moment, rather than that rosy-fingered dawn which liberals desire so deeply until it has arrived (whereupon they call it twilight of civilization), in the practical situation of today, the most ominous direct significance of the Federal Union racket lies in its anti-Soviet pretensions and possibilities.

Even more. Marxists are often accused of disdaining fact, relying only upon generalizations. Marxists deal with slogans, carryalls, catchwords, unrealities. For anyone who knows how thoroughly Marxism is grounded in fact and evidence, on the real motion of events, this charge is ludicrous, of course. Strangely, in the liberal hubbub over Federal Union no one has yet paused to note the *fact*, the *elementary geographic, scientific fact* that there already *exists in Europe a United States of nations:* gentlemen, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

In Europe alone, this "federal union" embraces the republics of Russia, the Ukraine, White Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan. Included in these areas are more than a dozen distinct autonomous regions: a galaxy of separate peoples. Larger than the rest of Europe, this union has been living at peace with itself for a whole generation. Ancient feuds have been dissolved. There are no longer any atrocities in Armenia. Pogroms against the Jews are a faint memory. Industry and agriculture flourish, diffused among all these peoples. Division of economic function arises naturally out of differences in climate, soil conditions, past history. Even here, man challenges and disputes nature. Interstate tariffs, currency wars, fratricidal struggle for markets: in a word, *capitalism* has been abolished, and good riddance. On this basis, the "United States of Socialist Russia" is a fact, something already achieved and won. Conversely, it is because the rest of the world, the capitalist world, has not yet acted upon the "secret" of socialist success that the vision of a peaceful, brotherly world is doomed to remain a bauble of after-dinner conversation, a plaything in the hands of desperate statesmen, a will o' the wisp deluding the people in their holiest aspirations.

MANKIND'S VISION

For there exists among all peoples a deep urge for order. Instinctively, men sense and understand that fratricidal conflicts are unnecessary. Men need no longer struggle over border demarcations, nor give their lives in the perpetuation of social relations which have demonstrably (and at great costs to themselves) outlived their utility. "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares," said the prophet Micah, "and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree. And none shall make them afraid."

The knowledge that men have of their ability to achieve this Biblical vision is capable of abuse and perversion. Woodrow Wilson abused it as does Hitler. Given the opportunity, Chamberlain and Roosevelt will do likewise, other stratagems failing them. Those who toy with so honest and precious an idea pervert the most fundamental desires of mankind. Under socialism this idea has been realized. Capitalism bars the way to the socialist example everywhere else. This is the essence of the problem. In these terms it must be faced.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

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Connecticut's Index Expurgatorius

Wellington Roe reports on the Catholic boycott of bookshops and newsstands purveying "The Grapes of Wrath," the "New Republic," "Life," and all other "subversive" literature.

THERE are 632,586 Catholics in the Hartford, Conn., Diocese; 302 churches and 708 clergymen (Official Catholic Directory, 1938). This is slightly more than one-third of the total population of Connecticut. The *Catholic Transcript,* published at Hartford, is the approved organ of the Diocese, that is, the mouthpiece of the Connecticut hierarchy.

Just in case some Catholic non-subscriber to the *Transcript* wants to know what he should do when the subscription agent comes around, the journal's masthead carries a letter from the Most Reverend Maurice F. McAuliffe, bishop of the Diocese. No gaudier recommendation could be offered, no better understanding of what is expected of them could be given Catholics, than this:

> The *Catholic Transcript* has long enjoyed the approval and endorsement of the bishop of Hartford. Its need is obvious and its success our consolation and comfort. It brings to the reader Catholic news from the ends of the earth, discusses problems of vital importance, exposes the errors of the day, and defends unflinchingly Catholic truth. It is an ideal Catholic journal. *It is the duty of every Catholic to read it* and be informed of the actuality of the Catholic Church. [My italics.]
>
> It is my deepest wish that it be found in every home in the Diocese.

The letter is signed in facsimile by Bishop McAuliffe. This is enough for any but the most independent Catholic, for if he needs any further enlightenment on his duty, his parish priest will give it.

The *Transcript* of Nov. 9, 1939, revealed the first step in one of the most brazen attempts ever made at censorship of literature. One-third of Connecticut's population was informed through the *Transcript* that beginning Sunday, November 12, no book could enter their homes unless it had the approval of the bishop. The newspaper accommodatingly assumed the sponsorship of this drive, but the Most Reverend Maurice F. McAuliffe made no bones whatever about the hierarchy's wishes in the matter. The *Transcript* fired the salvo, but the arsenal is at 140 Farmington Ave., Hartford, the Episcopal Residence.

The 632,586 Catholics, or that portion of them who attended church on November 12, were to take a pledge of adherence to a Code of Decency in Print, which would be read from the pulpit. Said the head on the *Transcript* front-page lead story, "500,000 Will Take Pledge For Decent Literature Sunday." With this was published the bishop's letter, reproduced on page 9. For a Catholic to oppose this call took a high degree of courage.

But this was not all; the priests had their instructions. And this was not all either; the Catholic societies, the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic War Veterans, the Catholic Action Council, the Connecticut Council of Catholic Women, the Knights of St. Patrick, and a dozen similar organizations had their orders, too. Note the next-to-last paragraph of the bishop's letter: "Pastors of the flock shall preach on this campaign on Sunday, November 12, and obtain the pledges of their parishioners." That word "obtain" is the clue to the whole setup. Not "request," not "ask for," not "suggest," the pledges of their parishioners, but *obtain* them. A word to the initiated is sufficient.

On Sunday the priests followed instructions and the Great Crusade was on.

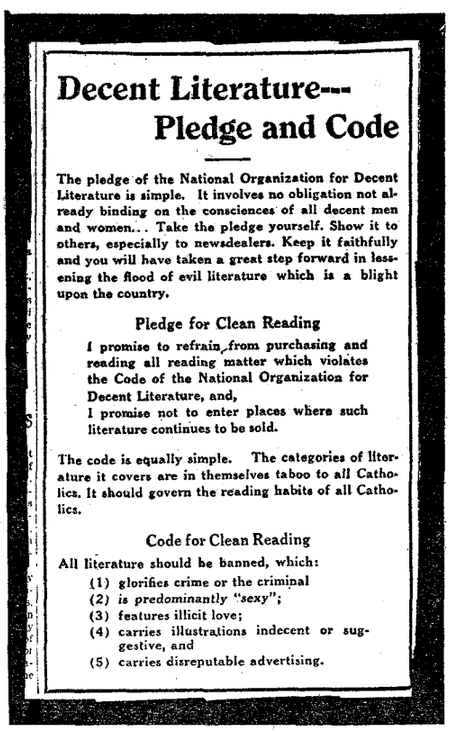
The *Transcript* reports that its estimate of conformity was good: over 500,000 took the pledge. One may question whether so many (90 percent) of any church's members attend services on a given Sunday, but this, I presume, would be picking at trifles. Presumably on that Sunday—one of vile weather, incidentally—babes in arms were pledged and there were few people sick or absent from the state or who had the hardihood to refuse the pledge.

THE PLEDGE

The pledge in itself seems reasonable enough; that is the ingenious design of its framers. It is so loosely worded that, under it, I could make out a case against any book ever published, including *Alice in Wonderland.* The parishioners were to pledge themselves only to "refrain from purchasing and reading all reading matter which violates the Code of the National Organization for Decent Literature." (The going gets a little rough here, because hitherto no association with any national organization has been mentioned. The National Organization for Decent Literature has been in existence for some time as a sort of bedraggled, unmentioned handmaiden of the Legion of Decency in Motion Pictures. It has not heretofore been active.) Parishioners must also "promise not to enter places where such literature continues to be sold." That last sentence is the weapon of the drive. If a labor union suggested such a step it would be called by the nasty word "boycott."

This is where the bookseller comes in. If he will not refuse to sell books disapproved by the hierarchy, Catholics adhering to the pledge won't enter his store. Followed to a logical conclusion, what this might do to a department store with a book department is not funny. What it did to a small stationer in Waterbury will be told later.

The *Transcript* explained in its article of November 9 that this pledge was "simple," that "it should govern the reading habits of all Catholics" anyway, and urged Catholics to "take the pledge yourself. Show it to others, especially to newsdealers." In other words, turn on the heat. The *Transcript* was too modest, or too cautious, to tell its readers what would happen to those who failed to see the light. This was left to the gentle tactics of the priests.



Decent Literature—Pledge and Code

The pledge of the National Organization for Decent Literature is simple. It involves no obligation not already binding on the consciences of all decent men and women... Take the pledge yourself. Show it to others, especially to newsdealers. Keep it faithfully and you will have taken a great step forward in lessening the flood of evil literature which is a blight upon the country.

Pledge for Clean Reading

I promise to refrain from purchasing and reading all reading matter which violates the Code of the National Organization for Decent Literature, and,
I promise not to enter places where such literature continues to be sold.

The code is equally simple. The categories of literature it covers are in themselves taboo to all Catholics. It should govern the reading habits of all Catholics.

Code for Clean Reading

All literature should be banned, which:

(1) glorifies crime or the criminal
(2) is predominantly "sexy";
(3) features illicit love;
(4) carries illustrations indecent or suggestive, and
(5) carries disreputable advertising.

A PLEDGE NOT TO READ. *The "decent reading" pledge is aimed at political rather than pornographic books.*

MISS JONES' INQUISITION

One dissenter has written me at length regarding the happenings of the next few days. I will call her Miss Jones because that isn't her name, and for other reasons which will appear presently. Miss Jones, a Catholic, would not take the pledge. She is a public school teacher and chairman of the library board in her small town. So, on Sunday, November 12, she refused to take the pledge of Decency in Literature, Clean Reading, Decency in Print—it is called all of these at various times.

The next day, the parish priest called at her school and remonstrated with her over the "omission." When she tried to object, he told her there was "no question of personal taste" where the church was concerned. But there is lots of good Irish fight in Miss Jones; she still refused to take the pledge. As the priest left, he uttered a warning: "I hope you won't get in any trouble because of your attitude." That was Monday, November 13.

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On Wednesday afternoon Miss Jones was visited at her home by a committee from the local Catholic Discussion Group led by a student of St. Thomas Seminary, Hartford (Diocesan School). Without any parley they demanded that she, as chairman of the library board, immediately withdraw from circulation John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath,* George Seldes' *The Catholic Crisis,* and Pietro di Donato's *Christ in Concrete.* Miss Jones reminded them that these books had been bought with the people's money (her library is tax-supported). What would the committee recommend doing with them?

The answer was instantaneous: "Burn 'em! Throw them in the sewer where they belong! They're dangerous."

"Oh," said Miss Jones. "They're dangerous. I thought you were after 'indecent' books, but you say these are dangerous."

"Well—I—I—yes, but indecent, too." Dangerous and indecent, the committee finally concluded. The books must be destroyed—not merely relegated to a "closed" shelf—destroyed.

This glorious fool, Jones, said "No" again, and the committee left in a huff.

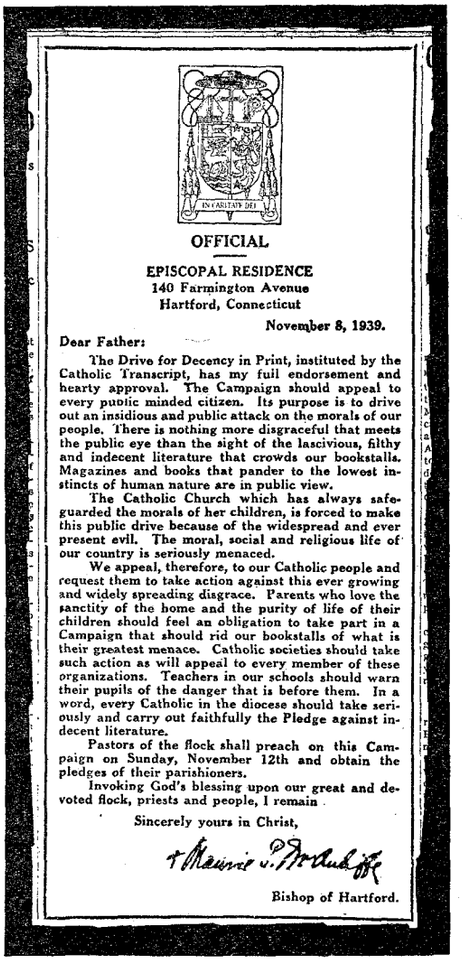
Anyone who doubts my appellation "glorious fool" must be unaware of the extreme pressures exerted financially, socially, and politically upon a dissenter in any small town, and particularly in Connecticut where the local school board, an elected group, completely controls all school matters, including employment, schedules, and curriculum. Miss Jones, incidentally, needs her job badly.

THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

On the Monday following the committee's visit, Miss Jones was called before the superintendent of schools and told that "the situation was intolerable"; that she was making a fool of herself by opposing a "little" thing like "purging a few books"; and that she "couldn't expect the school board to look on quietly while she put the whole school system in disrepute." Miss Jones tactfully said she'd think it over. She did; and decided that the right to read a book was as important as the right of freedom to worship which the church demands. In one of her letters she asked me, "Why is it that the church hierarchy can never see the danger of demanding suppression of others' ideas, while insisting on freedom for their own?" I couldn't answer that one either.

Out of Miss Jones' talk with the superintendent came one thing: she decided to find out how other librarians were faring under the church's drive. In a week she had learned that twenty-two libraries were resisting the pressure in varying degrees; one librarian had already lost her job because she had refused to purge her shelves of just about everything from Dickens to Hemingway; ten or a dozen more had decided not to fight and were putting the offending books in "storage."

Miss Jones went back to her job still "stubborn." Between December 15 and January 20, her priest called on her five times, and warned her that her teaching contract probably would not be renewed. Her library appropriation has been reduced from $900 to $300 for 1940, the $600 to be diverted to the town highway account. But she is still holding out.



OFFICIAL

EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE
140 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut

November 8, 1939.

Dear Father:

The Drive for Decency in Print, instituted by the Catholic Transcript, has my full endorsement and hearty approval. The Campaign should appeal to every public minded citizen. Its purpose is to drive out an insidious and public attack on the morals of our people. There is nothing more disgraceful that meets the public eye than the sight of the lascivious, filthy and indecent literature that crowds our bookstalls. Magazines and books that pander to the lowest instincts of human nature are in public view.

The Catholic Church which has always safeguarded the morals of her children, is forced to make this public drive because of the widespread and ever present evil. The moral, social and religious life of our country is seriously menaced.

We appeal, therefore, to our Catholic people and request them to take action against this ever growing and widely spreading disgrace. Parents who love the sanctity of the home and the purity of life of their children should feel an obligation to take part in a Campaign that should rid our bookstalls of what is their greatest menace. Catholic societies should take such action as will appeal to every member of these organizations. Teachers in our schools should warn their pupils of the danger that is before them. In a word, every Catholic in the diocese should take seriously and carry out faithfully the Pledge against indecent literature.

Pastors of the flock shall preach on this Campaign on Sunday, November 12th and obtain the pledges of their parishioners.

Invoking God's blessing upon our great and devoted flock, priests and people, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

†Maurice F. McAuliffe

Bishop of Hartford.

IMPRIMATUR. *The bishop of Hartford throws his weight behind the ukase not to read Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath."*

The booksellers are in a panic. No list of the banned books is available, although one priest, interviewed by a bookseller, talked vaguely of over two hundred proscribed titles. The booksellers, however, have no intention of fighting the ban; all they want to do is sell books profitably and keep out of trouble. Whose book or what kind of book they sell is not important. People who insist on reading the "indecent" works will get them somehow, the sellers say; the books can be ordered direct from the publisher. Why should a merchant risk having much of his trade swept away? "Remember," one Bridgeport bookseller remarked, "they won't just refuse to buy books from you, they'll not buy anything. They won't even come into your store." When it was suggested that he might be a little too pessimistic he said, "You don't know these Connecticut priests."

In Waterbury a stranger went to the city's leading newsstand-bookstore and asked for a current copy of NEW MASSES. The storekeeper looked at him surlily, said, "NEW MASSES? I never heard of it."

"It's a left magazine," the prospective customer told him. "It——"

"Never heard of it. I never heard of it, I said," the bookseller growled.

The stranger went to a friend and asked to see his copy.

"I mailed it off to my brother in Atlanta only this morning," the friend said. "Sorry, but you can get one at [naming the store from which the stranger had just come]. They sell it." He was amazed to hear that the bookseller had professed ignorance of the magazine. "Why, I bought one there only last week," he said. "Come on, we'll find out what this is all about."

They went to the bookstore and saw the proprietor. The talk was brief. Faced by a regular customer, the merchant was forced into an explanation: "You know, Mr. Blank, Waterbury's a Catholic town. There's a big Coughlin following here. I just couldn't sell NEW MASSES any more. I've been warned. I'd lose half my trade."

THE NEWSPAPERS DEFER

One of my correspondents wrote to the editor of a New Haven newspaper. He received no reply, and two weeks later he went to the paper's offices to find out why the letter wasn't published. The answer was: "We can't afford to antagonize our Catholic readers." He has since written letters on the subject to eight other newspapers in Bridgeport, Hartford, Waterbury, New London, New Britain, Willimantic, Danbury, and Norwich. Not one has published the letter.

There is some revolt against the censorship drive in Connecticut, but it is disorganized and voiceless. Catholic channels of communication have been closed by the bishop and his good men, and the commercial press refuses to be concerned. "It might antagonize our Catholic readers." Here is a job for labor unions, for true democrats both within and without the church. It is a job for speakers and for writers—an imperative duty, in fact.

The individual who has been told off as the bishop's hatchetman in this affair is one Father John S. Kennedy. It is hardly an accident that Father Kennedy is the man who wrote the *Transcript's* apologia for Franco; who stirred Connecticut Catholics to oppose lifting the embargo against republican Spain; who constantly quotes Father Joseph Thorning, SJ, who has repeatedly said that Father Coughlin is a "sincere and worthy minister of God." He seems ideally equipped, intellectually, for the task in which he is now engaged.

The queer aspect of this drive is that there is no published list of the "indecent" books. The proscribed titles are merely read off to the flock each Sunday by the local priest. It

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is interesting to know, however, that the first five books on the list so read were Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath,* Alvah Bessie's *Men in Battle,* Pietro di Donato's *Christ in Concrete,* George Seldes' *The Catholic Crisis,* and Ruth McKenney's *Industrial Valley*. Without question the last two are soiled by sex, glorify crime or the criminal, and feature illicit love! Or do they only express ideas which the Connecticut hierarchy wishes to smother?

Other untouchable books include Ernest Hemingway's *To Have and Have Not,* Edwin Rolfe's *The Lincoln Battalion,* John Strachey's *What Are We to Do?* Paul de Kruif's *The Fight for Life,* Constancia de la Mora's *In Place of Splendor,* Frederic Prokosch's *Night of the Poor,* Maury Maverick's *In Blood and Ink,* and, quite logically, all of Earl Browder's works. Magazines under fire are NEW MASSES, the *Nation, New Republic, Life, Equality,* and a long list of pulps. Such sexless items, however, as *Pic, Look, Girls in the News, American Mercury,* and Mr. Hearst's virginally pure *American Weekly* have so far escaped the ban.

If, as Father Kennedy has implied in his *Transcript* column, the hierarchy's aim is to control the culture of America and particularly to legislate the output of writers, what better way to do so than to make it impossible for disapproved books to reach a reader?

Connecticut is the eighth largest diocese in the United States, surpassed in number of communicants only by such outstanding Catholic communities as Boston, Chicago, Brooklyn, New York, Philadelphia, Newark, and Pittsburgh. Connecticut also has a high degree of literacy, the figure being 95.5 percent. If a censorship drive can succeed in Connecticut, the rest of the United States should be easy. This Connecticut effort does not result from a sporadic inflammation of theological conscience. It is part of a well conceived scheme, intended to encompass the nation.

Does this seem the absurd rationalization of a hectic imagination? Consider the moving picture industry where no film is produced until its essential parts have been approved by Joseph Breen, the church's representative in Will Hays' offices. It has happened in Hollywood—it is beginning to happen in publishing.

WELLINGTON ROE.

Mischa Richter

"They Never Speak as They Pass By"

Italics Ours

THE first six paragraphs of Leland Stowe's January 30 dispatch from Rovaniemi, Finland, surprised the readers of the many newspapers in which it appeared. Mr. Stowe appears to be apologizing for his own correspondence of the past two months.

The first two months of the Russo-Finnish war are completed today. They end with all the military victories—including the annihilation of three Red divisions—credited to the Finns, but with the Russians almost complete masters of the air, and with virtually all the long-term advantages in their favor. As on the Western Front, the critical struggle is expected here in March, if not before.

It is impossible to give a rounded summary of this war's progress to date since no correspondent knows more than a fraction of what has happened in any sector. As an example, although I arrived in Finland on December 5 and although I am one of the few who have visited four out of the five major war zones, *I have never yet seen as many as five hundred Finnish soldiers in any one place. In any other war of the century such an anomaly would have been unthinkable, but my case is the general rule and not the exception.*

This is true for several reasons. First, because forests cover 70 percent of Finland and the troops are easily concealed near every front. Also because rearguard garrisons are segregated, with their locations kept secret. *Chiefly, however, because the Finnish high command has taken pains that no correspondent should witness a major engagement,* and not one of us has yet seen a large-scale clash between Finnish and Russian forces. We have only been permitted to visit scenes of battles like those at Lake Tolva and Suomussalmi after the action had been completed and swung eastward by several miles.

Thus it happens that this is an almost unprecedented secret war and what correspondents see is most carefully restricted long before anything they write comes beneath the censor's pencil. As a result correspondents are rare who have been under fire more than once, even when on the Karelian Isthmus, and there are many here who have never yet had the experience.

Personally, I have watched only one artillery bombardment (this from a relatively safe position on the eastern side of this isthmus). Since that mid-December day, I have never been within hearing distance either of rifle or artillery fire. I have heard the explosion of Russian aerial bombs, and that is all.

Of course, the Finnish high command has its own reasons for these restrictions, and perhaps the foremost is Field Marshal Baron Carl Gustave Mannerheim's method of waging war with an absolute secrecy of strategy—*the natural tendency of the Finns to trust no one but themselves. It is also evident that Finnish losses and casualties have been systematically masked.*

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Bulletin from Three Fronts

Major Allen Johnson surveys the Northern, Western, and Far Eastern maneuvers and explains what all the recent shooting's for.

THE past two weeks have brought a gradual increase of Soviet pressure on the Mannerheim Line and on the front which stretches along the Mannerheim Line north of Lake Ladoga (the lake itself is an icy fighting front). Even the commercial press admits the increase of Soviet material in these sectors. The Red Army is aiming at the railhead at Sortavala; by lying across this line they break the eastern route north to south within Finland and make it possible to proceed more rapidly into the more densely populated regions of the country around Viborg and the Helsinki-Tamerfors area. The success of the offensive north of Lake Ladoga will make untenable the entire Mannerheim Line at present held by the Finns. Along the line of densest fortifications the Red Army is conducting a "holding" attack to pin down the Finnish troops and reserves in that area so that they cannot assist the troops in other sectors; breakdown of any of these reserves might enable this holding attack to become a main offensive at any point penetrated.

On the Salla front Soviet troops have evidently not been thrown back, as the press had claimed; they have, it appears, even proceeded very definitely toward their immediate objective at the railhead at Rovaniemi and have been reported as being within eighteen miles of that point.

PREPARING FOR INTERVENTION

The active assistance given the Finnish White Guard regime by the Allies, the Scandinavian governments, and the Roosevelt administration projects the possibility that the Finnish theater of war may shortly be transformed into a major theater of intervention against the Soviet Union. A recent discussion in the Paris *Temps* concerning military operations against Germany and the USSR put forward the proposal that united naval operations be organized against Petsamo and Murmansk. Gen. Sir Hubert Gough, commander of the British Fifth Army in the World War, has also urged this line of action, writing in the magazine *English Speaking World*. The rising tide of opposition within Scandinavia against involvement in war with the USSR emphasizes how clearly this new front would be interventionist. Since Germany is vitally interested in Swedish ore, it is possible that she may act as a restraining factor upon the Allied efforts to convert Scandinavia into a major theater of war.

Bitter weather has done little to change the situation on the Western Front. Europe is suffering an unusually severe winter. This will add to the difficulties and trials of soldiers forced into inactivity by the very nature of the belligerents' political and military strategy. If either opponent intends to try a flanking operation this winter through the Belgian-Netherlands sector, it must be carried out within the next four weeks; in this period the dykes and water defenses will be an aid rather than a hindrance to such operations. If postponed because of the political factors involved, such an operation could not be undertaken until late spring or summer. Thaw comes early in this part of Europe.

The Allies are continuing their "anaconda" strategy: putting the squeeze upon Germany on as many fronts as possible, by as many means as possible. There comes a time in all military operations when the necessity for obtaining a decision demands immediate action; at such a time the forces that endorse a limited war of attrition (Hore-Belisha and Liddell Hart) are dropped from the commanding positions. In the Allied councils there are forces demanding the extension of the war to other fronts at all costs because they require a decision as soon as possible—their own internal difficulties are compelling a change of strategy. Simultaneously the possibility again emerges of converting the present war of attrition against Germany into a united jehad—an annihilation campaign—against the Soviets.

SUCCESS AT SEA

While the operations on the Western Front have limited action to forays and raids, both belligerents are having a success beyond anything they had conceived at sea. True, Britain has ruined Germany's seaborne commerce by her naval blockade; but the effects of Germany's counter-blockade, her mine, submarine, and aviation campaign, against Britain have begun to do serious damage to living conditions in Britain. Rationing has been instituted after only five months of war; Lloyd George demands that every spare piece of land be cultivated regardless of whose property it is. The first year of the World War cost Britain 623,000 tons of shipping; the first five months of this war have already cost her 538,000 tons (New York *Times*, January 27). World War losses in the first year were 917,000 tons for the *whole world;* Allied and neutral losses alone to date have amounted to 938,000 tons. The British Navy has suffered serious losses in fighting craft; there is no reason to believe that the peak has been reached in the German counter-blockade campaign.

On the other hand the British blockade has been unable to prevent the return to their home ports of the *Bremen*, the *St. Louis*, and even warships, such as the *Deutschland*, and numerous submarines. The German Fleet has greater freedom of movement even in the North Sea than existed during the World War. The strength of the German naval forces is increasing; that this is true of the British naval forces also goes without saying. But any substantial increase in the German naval forces immediately creates the possibility of limited though quite decisive operations by the German fleet in the near future. The blockade cannot be 100 percent effective as long as the eastern continental areas are open to Germany for the passage of supplies from the Balkans and the outside world. Weather conditions may temporarily limit the capacity of the southeastern transportation systems, but as long as Germany is not compelled by heavy fighting to consume her war supplies faster than she can obtain them, the war can be prolonged indefinitely.

THE FAR EAST

Japanese operations in China are not going well. The gradual assumption of the offensive by the Chinese armies indicates the serious difficulties which confront the Japanese forces. In two and a half years of fighting, Japanese casualties have passed the million mark. This is about one-fifth of the mobilizable manpower of Japan; it means that all her first line reserves have already been used up. These military problems, together with her greatly weakened economy, constantly lessen chances of obtaining a decision in China.

While the United States is using every possible pressure against Japan, and while the difficulties in China increase for the Japanese army, there remains the possibility of Japanese adventures in other directions—a national strategy that has been advocated by their navy for years. Oil, rubber, and other supplies can be obtained in the East Indies. Attacks in the Japanese press have been concentrated upon Britain; threats have been made to France over the use of the arteries of communication for material moving into China through French Indo-China. There is even considerable belligerence toward the United States. The Wang Ching-wei traitor government will be unable to resolve the Japanese war in China in its present status quo. Thus it may be that the near future will see a Japanese naval strategy oriented toward adventures in the East Indies or against Siam while the army will attempt to consolidate its present holdings. The European war favors some such adventures by the Japanese; the decisive factor is the extent to which Japan receives American assistance in supplies.

Here, as against Germany, an "anaconda," peacetime strategy is being applied by the British and Americans to force Japan into the coalition against the Soviets; it is also being applied to bring "under the yoke" both Japanese and Chinese economy for exploitation by the major empires, the greatest aggressors—British, French, and American capital.

MAJOR ALLEN JOHNSON.

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The State of the Union

THIS DEPARTMENT, which NEW MASSES presents weekly, is the joint work of a group of correspondents who send us a letter each week telling about the state of their part of the nation. As more correspondents write in, our coverage will increase. We invite our readers to send their contributions of significant happenings, anecdotes, etc., to "The State of the Union," NEW MASSES.

Occhi Chornya with Knives

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The DAR, which would not permit Marian Anderson to sing in its Constitution Hall a year ago because she was an American Negro, allowed the General Piatov Don Cossack Chorus to give a recital there last week.

The fashionable audience of Daughters sobbed to the strains of "Dark Eyes" and other masterpieces of schmaltz, but when the White Russians went into their dance and dug up the fine hardwood stage with their knife casatsky the Daughters swooned away. Hitherto not even a tenant was permitted to drive a nail into the polished platform to set scenery. The DAR thinks that it was all a Red plot to ruin its hall: you never can trust these Russians, even if they are psalm-singing White Guards.

Finnish Flimflam

BOSTON.—Home from Boston's Prince Grammar School, a little girl last week brought her mother a typed slip reading, "Will you help with funds for the women and children of Finland? Send the money to school with your child." Just a typed slip—but it was enough to bring forth protests that reached the ears of neighbors: "It certainly is a fine thing! Sending children home to their poor parents who're just struggling along trying to keep the children in clothes, asking for money for a foreign war! And through the school system!"

Investigation into the matter so far has revealed: (1) Children in one class of the Prince School got these slips and were told to give them to their mothers. (2) A story in the Boston *Globe* stated that the Boston School Committee passed a resolution, at a meeting for which the records are not yet available, giving the Finnish Relief, Inc., permission to solicit funds through the school system. (3) Joseph Lee, School Committee member, has denied that the committee passed any such resolution, or discussed the Finnish question at all. A thorough investigation is being made by Boston citizens who oppose using the school system to bulldoze money for Mannerheim from poor families.

Rift in the Looters

JERSEY CITY.—For many years New Jersey's courts have been models of corruption; under Hague's domination they can't very well be anything else. Consequently there was little surprise several weeks ago when it was revealed that two vice chancellors in the Court of Chancery are doubles for Judge Martin Manton of New York, recently sentenced to jail because he was financially involved in companies which tried their cases before him. The pattern in New Jersey differs from the Manton case in that the good judges are involved in real estate instead of stocks.

The first disclosures of business relations between the vice chancellors and the lawyers who practice before them came two weeks ago when Arthur T. Vandebilt, one of the judges, released a few sensational rumors implicating the bench. Then Vice Chancellor Berry, seeking to squash the rumors, revealed that in 1925 he and ten other lawyers had purchased land for speculative purposes for $200,000. Berry's share was $35,000. He was co-maker of a note for $65,000 in connection with the deal; the note was substantially reduced later.

Several days later Vice Chancellor Bigelow, frightened by public clamor over the Berry connivance, revealed that he was involved in a real estate deal with an attorney practicing before him at the moment. He offered to withdraw from the case immediately. When the Bigelow case was disclosed, Chancellor Campbell, head of the Chancery court, ordered all other vice chancellors to reveal to him their business relationships with lawyers. But no one expects any action to be taken against those who do confess. The judges will swear their devotion to impartiality and a new rule will be promulgated precluding vice chancellors from presiding in cases where the lawyer or litigant is either business associate, creditor, or debtor.

Try, Try Again

TRENTON, N. J.—Ex-Gov. Harold G. Hoffman, now resting comfortably as director of New Jersey's unemployment compensation bureau, plans to become governor again. At the moment he's trying to woo the labor vote by refusing to go through hotel picketlines in Trenton and announcing that labor should be exempt from any payment into unemployment compensation funds. The trouble with this self-portrait of the "friend of the working man" is that organized labor well remembers the strikebreaking record of his last term in office. Undaunted by any lack of cheers from labor, however, Hoffman rushes along with his campaign, and fills his column in the Newark *Star-Ledger* with blank verse about Finnish heroics.

Who Robbed the Taxpayers?

BRIDGEPORT, CONN.—The impossible happened in Connecticut last week. In this state (when better scandals are made, we will make them), a neat little bombshell burst in Bridgeport—city of Mayor Jasper McLevy, old, old, old-guard Socialist. Under the very eyes of a McLevy-appointed official a city tax marshal was found by the city auditor to be short of $11,719 in collections over a period of several years.

An investigation has been launched. Nobody ties up the alleged dishonesty with McLevy himself. That doughty old "Socialist" is generally accredited with at least being materially honest, even though he comes out hammer and tongs for aid to White Guard Finland, bemoans the CIO, etc. But it is gratifying to some people to discover a possible scandal right inside the Great Jasper's own bailiwick. Only a short time ago this "Socialist" made use of two other Connecticut scandals—the Waterbury and Merritt parkway episodes—to burn up the two older parties and collect enough votes in a gubernatorial election to permit a reactionary Republican administration to slip, unwanted, into office.

Dies Blue Baby

DETROIT.—Olympia Stadium is the Madison Square Garden of Detroit. Last Thursday the Detroit Committee for Law and Order, a vigilante outfit, rented this nineteen-thousand seater for a meeting on "The Red Menace." It was to be one of those monster mass affairs, with thousands milling around outside unable to find seats. Sixty thousand free tickets were sent out; then, to do the thing up brown (shirt), Rep. Noah Mason of Illinois, corpulent No. 2 man on the Dies committee, was brought from Washington as the principal speaker.

The meeting was a tremendous success. Noah was at his antediluvian best. All of the other reactionary Republican speakers were in equally fine form. The only complaints came from members of the audience. They felt lonely—less than twelve hundred persons showed up.

Roll Out the Barrel

DETROIT.—Those who like to feel that the throwing of Brickerbats at the unemployed is confined to Cleveland had better take a look at the relief crisis brewing in Michigan. So frenzied is Gov. Luren Dickinson's apparent desire to persecute the unfortunate—be they crippled children, widowed mothers, or simple unemployed—that he has compromised with his arch-enemy, Demon Rum, to this end. He has approved the stand of the majority of the State Liquor Control Board to *overstock* with slow-moving items, after a minority member suggested that a million dollars could be released for relief purposes by not increasing the liquor inventory at this time. The anti-saloon league governor even expressed his willingness to sign liquor purchase orders, if necessary, to ensure the money going for booze instead of welfare.

Men of Iron

MINNESOTA.—Leo Koski, a candidate of the Communist Party for alderman from the iron range, has polled three times the vote Earl Browder did hereabouts in the last election. American Finns swelled his vote, giving one and all an idea of what they think about Mannerheim.

NEW YORK. Commander-in-Chief J. E. Andrew of the Grand Army of the Republic said at last Sunday's reception for him at the Hotel Pennsylvania, "I didn't see *Gone With the Wind* and I don't want to see it!"

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Out of Their Own Mouths

Theodore Draper reveals how the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact came about. What Louis Fischer muffed in the German "White" and French "Yellow" books. History restored.

On Jan. 27, 1934, Joseph Stalin made a sensational speech on the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact of Aug. 23, 1939.

If the sensation isn't obvious, look at the dates again.

Here were the circumstances. After the Nazis took power in 1933, an improvement in relations between the Soviet Union, France, and Poland materialized in non-aggression pacts. Stalin welcomed the change. He pointed out, in the speech of 1934, that "all and sundry imperialists looked upon Poland as the vanguard in the event of a military attack upon the USSR." Whatever restrained Poland seemed good to him.

Stalin strongly denied, however, that the Soviet government had adopted "an orientation towards France and Poland" in retaliation against the Nazis. Not that he liked the Hitler regime a bit, he said, but fascism was not the issue if only for the reason that the Italian variety did not then bar good relations. He insisted that Soviet policy never had an orientation to any other country but the USSR, though this did not exclude agreements with others. "If the interests of the USSR demand rapprochement with this or that country which is not interested in disturbing peace," he said, "we shall take this step without hesitation."

Still more, Stalin admitted that German-Soviet relations were very strained. He did so, however, in such a way as to leave the door open for future improvement. The German rulers always differed on policy towards the Soviet Union, one group advocating peaceful relations on the model of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1926 and another following the example of the kaiser's occupation of the Ukraine in 1917. Stalin felt that the latter had gained the upper hand. By thus blaming the German-Soviet estrangement on the Nazis, Stalin implied that German ambitions rather than Soviet dogma were preventing a rapprochement between the two nations.

In the second article of his recent series in the *Nation* (January 6), Louis Fischer neglected this speech and thereby missed a great opportunity. He set out to prove that Hitler had "acted on Stalin's suggestion" in the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact. For some reason he felt that this, if true, disgraced Soviet policy. Obviously, the speech of 1934 suited his purposes. It plainly suggested that a revision of German policy would improve German-Soviet relations, and practically foreshadowed the non-aggression pact of 1939.

Instead, Fischer chose to make a sensation out of a much later speech by Stalin, of March 10, 1939. Not that he quoted from it directly, though presumably he read it. He chose, curiously, to use a reference to Stalin's speech in an even later address, made Aug. 31, 1939, by Foreign Commissar Molotov. Molotov said:

> Comrade Stalin posed the question of good neighbor relations without enmity between Germany and the Soviet Union. It can be seen now that the declarations of Comrade Stalin were, in general, correctly understood by Germany, and that Germany drew political consequences from them.

Fischer pounced on this passage with the tingle of discovery. He willfully converted it into an unintentional confession of secret guilt. Before telling his readers just what Molotov had said about Stalin's speech, he warned them: "The first hint that led to the Russo-German Pact was thrown out by Stalin." After letting Molotov break the news, Fischer concluded: "Unsuspected by outsiders and without any announcement, Germany had acted on Stalin's suggestion." As further evidence of dirty work in the Kremlin, Fischer claimed that the Germans hesitated to reach an agreement but broke down and signed when the Soviets pressed them and "showed greater eagerness." Apparently all the Soviets had to do to get the pact was to want it badly enough.

BAD HISTORY

There are two things wrong with this account. It is bad interpretation of Soviet policy, and it is bad history of the background of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact.

Stalin's speeches of Jan. 27, 1934, and March 10, 1939, made just about the same point, except that in the earlier one Poland happened to occupy Germany's political position. The occasions were equally important: the seventeenth and eighteenth congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. If one anticipated the pact with Germany, so did the other.

Fischer blotted out the past because on no other basis could he pretend that the Soviet-German Pact abruptly broke with all Soviet tradition. His whole case would collapse, indeed, reduce itself to absurdity, if Stalin had invited Germany to renounce her anti-Soviet ambitions and accept "good neighbor relations without enmity" as far back as 1934. Worse still for Fischer if the pact corresponded with policy at least as old as the Russian Revolution.

Lenin once chuckled because Anglo-French capitalism failed in its plan to use Finland as the main base for intervention against the young Soviet republic. He had no more illusions about the Finnish government than Stalin had about Poland in 1934 or Germany in 1939. Lenin said in December 1919:

> The Finnish bourgeoisie, which has stifled thousands of Finnish workers during the White terror and knows that it will never be forgiven for having done so, and that it is no longer backed by the German bayonets which enabled it to do so—this Finnish bourgeoisie hates the Bolsheviks with all the vehemence with which a plunderer hates the workers who have thrown him off.

Nevertheless, Lenin pointed out that the same Finnish rulers knew that to fight the USSR in behalf of Anglo-French imperialism would finish all their hopes of independence. So the Soviets granted them their independence and temporarily deprived the interventionist Allies of an indispensable fighting force.

The Soviets thus blunted the edge of the sharpest sword aimed against them and they have been doing that ever since. When Poland replaced Finland in the title role, "the vanguard in the event of a military attack upon the USSR," the Soviets just as gladly deprived the Polish rulers of that responsibility. When German military strength recovered under the Nazi regime, Poland retired in favor of Germany. Soviet policy never prevented a peaceful understanding with Germany, any more than with Poland and France previously. Both sides actively plotted against the Soviet power as long as they could afford to do so, which is to say, as long as their rivals did not seriously threaten them. When the Germans changed their minds in 1939, they essentially followed the excellent example set by the Poles and the French. It wasn't the first time, nor may it be the last, that imperialist groups changed places with relation to the USSR in order to settle the differences between them.

WHEN THIEVES FALL OUT

In both cases, the USSR benefited from a vendetta between robbers. Like Germany before them, the Western powers cried out in pain. They had nobody to blame but themselves. German-Soviet enmity became an axiom in their pre-war diplomacy in order that they might intrigue with Germany against the USSR, and still feel sure about falling back on the Soviets against Germany in case of extreme necessity. This diplomacy collapsed, for one reason, because German-Soviet enmity had enabled Britain and France to play fast and loose with both sides in comparative safety. But more than one could play at that game.

Along with Anglo-French diplomacy, Fischer naturally adopted this axiom of German-Soviet enmity. He pointed at Molotov's speech as if there were something indecent in it. The incriminating sentence read: "Comrade Stalin posed the question of good neighbor relations without enmity between Germany and the Soviet Union."

As a confession of guilt, this belonged somewhere between the multiplication table and an

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ordinance against spitting on the floor. That Stalin posed the question of rapprochement changed nothing at all. That Hitler heeded it, after violently refusing for so long, made the only real difference. Stalin never wrote, as did Hitler about the USSR: "However, if we speak today in Europe of new land and soil, we can primarily think only of *Germany* and the border states that are subject to her." Nor did he get gifts of Austria and Czechoslovakia from the Western powers in order to fatten up for the conquest of *Germany*. On the contrary, the German-Soviet Pact conformed to the traditional standpoint expressed in the speech of Jan. 27, 1934.

In his opening article, Fischer wrote: "The international scene is a giant jigsaw puzzle. When one piece falls out of place, all the other pieces move."

Agreed. But he hopelessly distorted the issue by deliberately creating the impression that the Soviet piece fell out of place. He made the Soviets come like beggars to Berlin. They "hinted," "pressed the Germans," "showed greater eagerness than Hitler," while "the Germans hesitated."

Nothing of the sort. The Soviet-German Pact never happened that way. The mere conception of the pact represented a colossal retreat from the historic pretensions of the Hitler regime. It was the German piece, unmistakably the German piece, which fell out of the jigsaw puzzle as put together at Munich. That break, and no other, forced all the other pieces to move.

"WHITE" AND "YELLOW" BOOKS

Confirmation of this vital point "out of their own mouths" most recently appeared in the German "White Book" and the French "Yellow Book."

Soon after the Munich settlement, the Soviets managed to entrench themselves in a strategic position in relation to both Germany and the Anglo-French bloc. At Munich, from which they were arrogantly excluded by both sides, they lost their only ally in Eastern Europe. At the same time, they could no longer afford to count on France. The Czechs tested the strength of the Franco-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact when their own pact with France proved to be a worthless piece of paper. The kindest thing written by political journalists in Paris and London closest to their governments was that the Soviet, at last, had been pushed back into Asia, presumably to await the fate of Czechoslovakia.

The Hitler regime had other plans. Immediately after the Munich meeting, it began to prepare a crisis for the West. In speech after speech, starting with one at Saarbrucken on Oct. 9, 1938, Hitler aimed his verbal punches more and more violently and exclusively at the British empire. On Jan. 30, 1939, before the Reichstag, he struck directly against the Western empires with a militant colonial program and an "Export or die!" campaign. The USSR had no colonies and no coveted trade.

Simultaneously, the German government let Poland know that she was no longer an ally but a prey. Ribbentrop first demanded Danzig and a motor road-plus-railroad through the Corridor, on Oct. 24, 1938. Having surrendered Czechoslovakia, the Anglo-French bloc was in no position to save, or even to help, Poland. At first, the Western powers showed no particular interest in the new German objective. Their interest in Poland increased in direct ratio to Germany's threats against themselves. They could not save Poland but they could use her.

Implicitly, Hitler's threats against the British and Mussolini's against the French (in those days, the fascist division of labor) eased the pressure against the USSR. By December 1938 some diplomatic sources close to Germany took the hint. The French "Yellow Book" relates one such case. On Dec. 16, 1938, M. Rene Ristelhueber, French ambassador in Sofia, informed his foreign minister in Paris, Georges Bonnet, of a conversation with the Bulgarian premier, George Kiosseivanov. The latter felt that Poland rather than Southeastern Europe was most immediately menaced by Germany, and strongly doubted the possibility of an enduring Soviet-Polish entente. Moreover, he "did not exclude"—though he somewhat unnecessarily brought the "Comintern" into the speculation—"the possibility of a rapprochement between the USSR and the Reich. Such has always been the dream of a portion of the German General Staff."

Bonnet, meanwhile, received other advices from M. Robert Coulondre, his ambassador in Berlin. On December 15, Coulondre assured him:

> The desire for expansion by the Third Reich in the East appears to me, in effect, as certain as its renunciation, at least for the present, of all conquest in the West; one is the corollary of the other.

Coulondre confidently reported that Hitler intended to "dispossess" the USSR of the Ukraine:

> To become master of Central Europe by making Czechoslovakia and Hungary into vassals, then to create the Great Ukraine under German domination: such appears to be essentially the conception now adopted by the Nazi leaders, and without doubt by Hitler himself.

In the same dispatch, Coulondre absolved the Nazis of colonial ambitions until, presumably, the hoped-for partition of the Soviet Union.

No doubt this tickled Bonnet. Throughout October-November 1938, Bonnet haggled and pleaded with Ribbentrop for a Franco-German "understanding." He obtained it on December 6, and Coulondre's report on December 15 is evidence of the anti-Soviet context of that "accord."

APPEASEMENT

The British government groveled equally low after the Munich deal. On November 1, Prime Minister Chamberlain charitably acknowledged Germany's "predominating position in relation to the states of Central and Eastern Europe." During the week before the second invasion of Czechoslovakia, the appeasement atmosphere in London thickened into a blinding political fog. On March 9—though European chancelleries buzzed with the coming coup by March 8, and Coulondre half-warned Bonnet on March 2—Chamberlain actually told a group of journalists that reports of the international situation were so favorable that he expected a disarmament conference (of all things!) before the end of summer. When Hitler entered Prague six days later, Chamberlain showed almost no emotion, and uttered the very minimum of disapproval. Indeed, he defended the fuehrer against charges of "false faith."

In the Fischer mythology, the Soviet government never gave the British a real chance in the April-to-August negotiations. The Stalin speech in March was supposed to prove this. No speech could prove the exact contrary more decisively. Never were prospective victims warned so strongly.

The portion of the speech devoted to international affairs made two chief points. It warned the Western powers that they, not the USSR, had suffered most in the wheels of the fascist axis. It advised them not to depend on a German-Soviet war as their solution. Stalin virtually begged the French and British governments to open their eyes to the plain realities of their own position. He tried to disabuse them of Germany's alleged Ukrainian ambitions. He candidly demonstrated Soviet awareness of their fondest hope:

> They [certain politicians and journalists in the hire of the Western powers] are saying quite openly, putting it down in black on white, that the Germans have cruelly "disappointed" them, for instead of marching farther east, against the Soviet Union, they have turned to the West, you see, and are demanding colonies. One might think that the districts of Czechoslovakia were yielded to Germany as the

Skis

I think that I shall never see
An object noble as a ski,

A ski on which the doughty Finn
Chases the Reds around like sin;

A ski rivaling little 'Liza
With feats on ice that would surprise ya;

A ski, her curvesome bottom waxed
With dough from hides of peasants taxed;

Ready for any sort of capers.
(For full details, see morning papers.)

Loans may be made by Franklin D.,
But only Finns know how to ski.

JOHN LORING.

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price o. an undertaking to launch a war on the Soviet U ion, but now the Germans are refusing and sendi ɜ them to Hades.

If Stalin put anything in Hitler's mind, he no less strongly tried to put the same thing in the minds of Prime Minister Chamberlain and Premier Daladier.

Then the USSR gave the Western powers a second chance. The negotiations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union opened in Moscow on April 15. According to popular impression, skillfully cultivated by British propagandists, the Soviets bargained with the British for four months, suddenly decided for mysterious reasons of their own to break off the negotiations, hurriedly called in the Germans and concluded an alternative pact with Germany, to the shock and dismay of the Western powers.

Now it can be told. The Germans watched the drama of the Anglo-Soviet negotiations with intense self-interest. Naturally, they wished no Anglo-Soviet alliance. Nor were they satisfied merely to depend upon the British fixation on a German-Soviet war. This worked in their favor but they took more practical steps to prevent Anglo-Soviet cooperation.

Between mid-March and early May, members of the Nazi inner circle made up their minds about an approach to the Soviets. Some time in April, Ribbentrop told Count Ciano about it. Later, on May 6-7, the two foreign ministers met in Milan to prepare for the Italo-German "military alliance" later that month. At that time, Ciano heard that Germany had definitely decided to "neutralize" the USSR and that the first approaches had already been made.

NO SECRET

Inner government circles in London and Paris knew this almost as soon as it happened, if only because neither Ciano nor certain German leaders made any secret of it. The Rome correspondent of the London *Times* and the Berlin correspondent of the New York *Times* both gave an exact report of German intentions on May 6-7. Writing from different capitals, their agreement on those days was no accident.

Following the French "Yellow Book," Coulondre's first advice to Bonnet on the new German strategy came on May 7, three weeks after the beginning of the Anglo-Soviet negotiations and more than three months before their close. According to Coulondre, a member of Hitler's inner circle revealed "Germany's orientation towards Russia" in a conversation with an unnamed diplomat in Berlin. The date suggests that Count Ciano had something to do with the "slip." Coulondre reported the details in all seriousness, though he cautioned Bonnet that the too talkative informant may have deliberately exaggerated "in order to exercise pressure or make an impression on us." Coulondre, moreover, was not certain whether Hitler himself "has already decided upon his line of action, or made his choice between a true entente with the USSR and a mere diplomatic maneuver intended to turn the situation in his favor." He himself tended to favor the latter supposition.

On May 9, Coulondre again speculated about German-Soviet relations, though once more indecisively. He resorted to a series of questions for Bonnet's consideration, such as: "After having tried to steer Poland against Russia, are they reversing the maneuver and trying to play Moscow against Warsaw in order to intimidate the Poles?" Furthermore, he cautioned Bonnet that all the rumors about a German-Soviet understanding might have misinterpreted "desires" for "realities" on Germany's part.

Not until May 22 was Coulondre certain about Ribbentrop's, if not Germany's, intentions. According to his report, Ribbentrop was obsessed with the idea that a rapprochement between Germany and the USSR was necessary to overcome Poland. Coulondre added significantly: "Ribbentrop's hope that German-Russian collusion would one day enable the Reich to strike a mortal blow at the world power of the British empire may have been strengthened during these last few days by the difficulties encountered in the course of the Anglo-Soviet negotiations." This remark clearly showed how British opposition to a true alliance with the Soviets encouraged the Nazis to make their own peace with the Soviets. Hitler, however, still hesitated about revising German policy towards the Soviet Union for "ideological reasons," wrote Coulondre, while Ribbentrop, "with the obstinacy of a fanatic," sought to win him over.

Coulondre's reports of May 7, 9, and 22 clearly indicate that Germany made the first approaches to the Soviet Union, rather than the other way round as Fischer would have it. Coulondre repeatedly used such expressions as, "if the fuehrer's intention is really to attempt a rapprochement with the USSR" (May 7) and "the slow and uneven course of the Anglo-Russian negotiations continues to bolster certain hopes among official circles in Berlin" (May 9). In any case, Molotov definitely attributed the initiative to Germany in his speech on August 31, the speech which Fischer tried to use to prove the exact contrary. "In the spring of this year the German government made a proposal to resume commercial and credit negotiations," Molotov said, and later added, "When the German government expressed a desire to improve political relations, as well, the Soviet government had no grounds for refusing."

The German "White Book" provides equally interesting detail. On June 13, Sir Nevile Henderson, British ambassador to Germany, visited Baron Weizsacker, the leading permanent official in the German Foreign Ministry. Henderson told Weizsacker that Anglo-German "talks" were impossible during the Anglo-Soviet negotiations in Moscow, but that there could be further talks between Great Britain and Germany if an Anglo-Soviet pact were signed. In other words, the pact would simply give Great Britain a better bargaining position to strike a deal with Germany. On June 16, Coulondre made the same observation in a private interview with Weizsacker. On June 15, Ambassador Dirksen in London wired Ribbentrop that fear of a German-Soviet settlement had greatly increased in British political circles.

Thus the diplomatic documents already published demonstrate to a certainty that:

1. Germany came to Moscow with a peace-offering soon after Great Britain.
2. Great Britain and France knew of the German action almost as soon as it occurred, in any case by May.
3. Anglo-French intransigence toward a true alliance with the Soviets encouraged the Germans in their new policy.
4. The Western powers were in a superior bargaining position because their ability to accept an alliance automatically eliminated the Germans. (As late as August 18, Coulondre told Bonnet "it is necessary at all cost to finish the Russian affair," indicating that until then, in his informed view, the Western powers still could cut in ahead of the Germans.)
5. The Soviet government held up a rapprochement with Germany for at least three months, and possibly somewhat more, in order to give the Western powers maximum opportunity to accept a true alliance.

Hypocritically, the French and British governments encouraged their venal press to spread the impression that the German-Soviet Pact came to them as a shocking surprise. Actually, they tolerated the German approaches in Moscow; otherwise they should have broken off their own negotiations in retaliation.

Where did it get them? Their bluff, not the Soviets', encouraged the Germans to beat them in Moscow. They, not the Soviets, led the Polish government, their own ally, into a murderous trap. They confront Germany today because they failed to dupe the Soviets into an equally monstrous deception.

THEODORE DRAPER.

This is the second of three articles by Mr. Draper. The third will appear next week.

Try This on Your Ukulele

"NO NATION ever had a better cause than Finland. Mere sympathy isn't much use. Therefore I favor non-military aid to Finland, given as far as possible in a way to strengthen the democratic forces in Finland as distinguished from the fascist forces like General Mannerheim, and certainly given so as not to involve the United States in the European war."—NORMAN THOMAS, *"Socialist Call," January 27.*

Memo to Dr. Juan Negrin

"IT WAS also announced that the gambling tables at Monte Carlo would soon contribute to Finnish relief a percentage of the receipts for several evenings."—*Item from France, Associated Press, January 31.*

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To Abraham Lincoln
President of the United States
of America

Sir

We congratulate the American People upon your Re-election by a large Majority. If resistance to the Slave power was the reserved Watchword of your first election, the triumphant Warcry of your Re-election is, Death to Slavery.

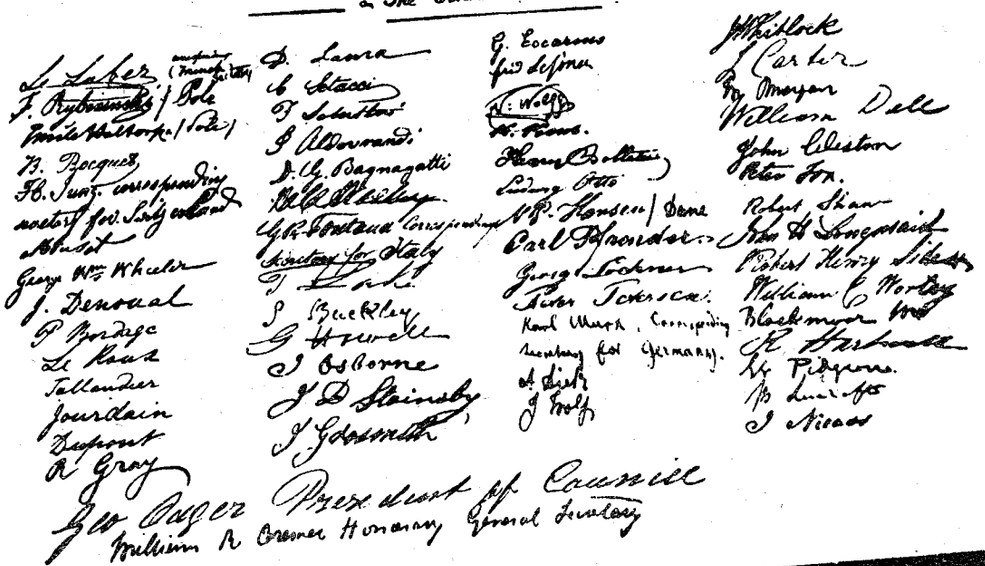
From the commencement of the titanic American Strife, the Working men felt instinctively that the Star spangled Banner carried the Destiny of their class. The Contest for the territories which opened the dire epoque, Was it not to decide whether the virgin soil of immense tracts should be wedded to the Labour of the Emigrant, or prostituted by the Treason of the Slave Driver?

When an Oligarchy of 300,000 Slaveholders dared to inscribe, for the first time in the annals of the World, Slavery on the Banner of Armed Revolt; when on the very spots where hardly a century ago the idea of one great democratic Republic had first sprung up, Whence the first Declaration of the Rights of Man was issued, and the first impulse given to the European Revolution of the 18th Century; When on those very spots counter revolution, with systematic thoroughness, gloried in rescinding "The Ideas entertained at the time of the formation of the old Constitution" and maintained "Slavery to be a beneficent Institution, indeed the only solution of the great problem of the relation of Labour to Capital", and practically proclaimed property in Man "the corner stone of the New Edifice": Then the Working Classes of Europe understood at once, Even before the famine prefabricated partisanship of the Upper Classes for the confederate gentry had given its distinct warning, That the Slaveholders' Rebellion was to sound the tocsin for a general holy Crusade of Property against Labour, and that for the Men of Labour, with their hopes for the future, even their past conquests were at stake in that tremendous Conflict on the other side of the Atlantic. Everywhere they bore therefore patiently the hardships imposed upon them by the Cotton crisis, opposed enthusiastically the Pro Slavery Intervention, impportunities of their betters, and from most parts of Europe contributed their quota of blood to the good cause.

While the Working Men, the true political power of the North, allowed Slavery to defile their own Republic, while before the Negro, murdered and sold without his concurrence, they hoisted it the highest prerogative of the white skinned Laborer to sell himself and choose his own Master, they were unable to attain the true freedom of Labour or to support their European Brethren in their struggle for Emancipation, but their barrier to progress has been swept off by the red sea of Civil War.

The Working Men of Europe feel sure that as the American War of Independence initiated a new era of ascendancy for the Middle Class, so the American Anti-Slavery War will do for the Working Classes. They consider it an moment of this epoch to come, that it falls to the lot of Abraham Lincoln, the single minded Son of the Working Class, to lead his Country through the matchless struggle for the rescue of an enchained Race and the Reconstruction of a Social World.

Signed on behalf of the International Working Men's Association
The Central Council



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Abe Lincoln and the First International

An interesting and important document of American history written by Karl Marx on the occasion of Lincoln's reelection. Charles Francis Adams' reply. Letter to Andrew Johnson.

THE facsimile on the opposite page is the historic address sent by the International Workingmen's Association (First International) to Abraham Lincoln on his reelection as President of the United States. The address was written by the outstanding leader of the First International, Karl Marx, who was one of the signers. The First International, founded at London on Sept. 28, 1864, was the first organization to unite the working class movements of various countries. Its last headquarters were in New York. The First International was the precursor of the Second International, founded in 1889, and the Third (Communist) International, founded in 1919. The address, which is printed in full below, is included in the volume by Marx and Engels, *The Civil War in the United States,* issued by International Publishers:

Sir: We congratulate the American people upon your reelection by a large majority. If resistance to the Slave Power was the reserved watchword of your first election, the triumphant war cry of your reelection is Death to Slavery.

From the commencement of the titanic American strife the workingmen of Europe felt instinctively that the star-spangled banner carried the destiny of their class. The contest of the territories which opened the dire epopee, was it not to decide whether the virgin soil of immense tracts should be wedded to the labor of the emigrant or prostituted by the tramp of the slave driver?

When an oligarchy of 300,000 slaveholders dared to inscribe for the first time in the annals of the world "slavery" on the banner of armed revolt, when on the very spots where hardly a century ago the idea of one great democratic republic had first sprung up, whence the first Declaration of the Rights of Man was issued, and the first impulse given to the European revolution of the eighteenth century; when on those very spots counter-revolution, with systematic thoroughness, gloried in rescinding "the ideas entertained at the time of the formation of the old Constitution," and maintained "slavery to be a beneficent institution," indeed, the only solution of the great problem of the "relation of capital to labor," and cynically proclaimed property in man "the cornerstone of the new edifice"—then the working classes of Europe understood at once, even before the fanatic partisanship of the upper classes for the Confederate gentry had given its dismal warning, that the slaveholders' rebellion was to sound the tocsin for a general holy crusade of property against labor, and that for the men of labor, with their hopes for the future, even their past conquests were at stake in that tremendous conflict on the other side of the Atlantic. Everywhere, therefore, they bore patiently the hardships imposed upon them by the cotton crisis, opposed enthusiastically the pro-slavery intervention—importunities of their betters—and, from most parts of Europe, contributed their quota of blood to the good cause.

While the workingmen, the true political power of the North, allowed slavery to defile their own republic, while before the Negro, mastered and sold without his concurrence, they boasted it the highest prerogative of the white-skinned laborer to sell himself and choose his own master, they were unable to attain the true freedom of labor, or to support their European brethren in their struggle for emancipation; but this barrier to progress has been swept off by the red sea of civil war.

The workingmen of Europe feel sure that, as the American War of Independence initiated a new era of ascendancy for the middle class, so the American anti-slavery war will do for the working classes. They consider it an earnest of the epoch to come that it fell to the lot of Abraham Lincoln, the single-minded son of the working class, to lead the country through the matchless struggle for the rescue of an enchained race and the reconstruction of a social world.

Signed, on behalf of the International Workingmen's Association, the Central Council: Longmaid, Worley, Whitlock, Fox, Blackmore, Hartweil, Pidgeon, Lucraft, Weston, Dell, Nieass, Shaw, Lake, Buckley, Osborne, Howell, Carter, Wheeler, Stanisby, Morgan, Grossmith, Dick, Denoual, Jourdain, Morrissot, Leroux, Bordage, Bosquet, Talandier, Dupont, L. Wolff, Aldrovandi, Lama, Solustri, Nusperli, Eccarius, Wolff, Lessner, Pfander, Lochner, Thaub, Bolliter, Rypczinski, Hansen, Schantzenback, Smales, Cornaline, Petersen, Otto, Bagnagatti, Setacci; Georges Odgers, president of Council; P. V. Lubez, corresponding secretary for France; Karl Marx, corresponding secretary for Germany; G. P. Fontana, corresponding secretary for Italy; J. E. Holtorp, corresponding secretary for Poland; H. F. Jung, corresponding secretary for Switzerland; William R. Cremer, hon. gen. secretary.

Far from scorning the support of the "Reds" of his day, Lincoln instructed the American ambassador to England, Charles Francis Adams, to send a friendly reply. In a letter to Friedrich Engels dated Feb. 10, 1865, Marx wrote: "The fact that Lincoln has replied to us so courteously and to the 'Bourgeois Emancipation Society' so rudely and purely formally has made the *Daily News* so angry that it did *not* print the reply to us. . . . The difference between L[incoln]'s reply to us and to the bourgeois has made such a stir here that the 'Clubs' in the West End are shaking their heads over it. You can understand how much good this does our people." (The Dies committee ought to get after that "innocent front," Abe Lincoln!) Ambassador Adams' letter, which was addressed to W. R. Cremer, honorary general secretary of the International Workingmen's Association, follows:

Sir: I am directed to inform you that the address of the Central Council of your association, which was duly transmitted through this legation to the President of the United States, has been received by him. So far as the sentiments expressed by it are personal, they are accepted by him with a sincere and anxious desire that he may be able to prove himself not unworthy of the confidence which has been recently extended to him by his fellow-citizens, and by so many of the friends of humanity and progress throughout the world. The government of the United States has a clear consciousness that its policy neither is nor could be reactionary, but at the same time it adheres to the course which it adopted at the beginning, of abstaining everywhere from propagandism and unlawful intervention. It strives to do equal and exact justice to all states and to all men, and it relies upon the beneficial results of that effort for support at home and for respect and good will throughout the world. Nations do not exist for themselves alone, but to promote the welfare and happiness of mankind by benevolent intercourse and example. It is in this relation that the United States regard their cause in the present conflict with slavery-maintaining insurgents as the cause of human nature, and they derive new encouragement to persevere from the testimony of the workingmen of Europe that the national attitude is favored with their enlightened approval and earnest sympathies.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant, Charles Francis Adams.

After Lincoln's assassination the First International sent an address to his successor, Andrew Johnson, which paid glowing tribute to the personality and achievements of Lincoln. The address, also written by Marx, said:

Sir: The demon of the "peculiar institution," for the supremacy of which the South rose in arms, would not allow his worshippers to honorably succumb on the open field. What he had begun in treason, he must needs end in infamy. As Philip II's war for the Inquisition bred a Gerard, thus Jefferson Davis' pro-slavery war a Booth.

It is not our part to call words of sorrow and horror, while the heart of two worlds heaves with emotion. Even the sycophants who, year after year, and day by day, stuck to their Sisyphus work of morally assassinating Abraham Lincoln and the great republic he headed, stand now aghast at this universal outburst of popular feeling, and rival with each other to strew rhetorical flowers on his open grave. They have now at last found out that he was a man, neither to be browbeaten by adversity, nor intoxicated by success, inflexibly pressing on to his great goal, never compromising it by blind haste, slowly maturing his steps, never retracing them, carried away by no surge of popular favor, disheartened by no slackening of the popular pulse; tempering stern acts by the gleams of a kind heart, illuminating scenes dark with passion by the smile of humor, doing his titanic work as humbly and homely as heaven-born rulers do little things with the grandiloquence of pomp and state; in one word, one of the rare men who succeed in becoming great, without ceasing to be good. Such, indeed, was the modesty of this great and good man that the world only discovered him a hero after he had fallen a martyr.

To be singled out by the side of such a chief, the second victim to the infernal gods of slavery, was an honor due to Mr. Seward. Had he not, at a time of general hesitation, the sagacity to foresee and the manliness to foretell "the irrepressible con-

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flict"? Did he not, in the darkest hours of that conflict, prove true to the Roman duty to never despair of the republic and its stars? We earnestly hope that he and his son will be restored to health, public activity, and well deserved honors within much less than "ninety days."

After a tremendous war, but which, if we consider its vast dimensions, and its broad scope, and compare it to the Old World's Hundred Years' Wars, and Thirty Years' Wars, and Twenty-three Years' Wars, can hardly be said to have lasted ninety days, yours, Sir, has become the task to uproot by the law what has been felled by the sword, to preside over the arduous work of political reconstruction and social regeneration. A profound sense of your great mission will save you from any compromise with stern duties. You will never forget that to initiate the new era of the emancipation of labor, the American people devolved the responsibilities of leadership upon two men of labor —the one Abraham Lincoln, the other Andrew Johnson.

Signed on behalf of the International Workingmen's Association, London, May 13, 1865, by the Central Council: Charles Kaub, Edward Coulson, F. Lessner, Carl Pfander, N. P. Stanen, Karl Schapper, William Dell, George Lochner, George Eccarius, John Osborne, P. Peterson, A. Janks, H. Klimosch, John Weston, H. Bolliter, B. Lucraft, J. Buckley, Peter Fox, M. Salvatells, George Howell, Bordage, A. Valtier, Robert Shaw, J. H. Longmaid, M. Morgan, G. W. Wheeler, J. D. Nieass, W. C. Worley, D. Stanisby, F. de Lassasire, F. Carter; Emile Holtorp, secretary for Poland; Karl Marx, secretary for Germany; H. Jung, secretary for Switzerland; E. Dupont, secretary for France. E. Whitlock, financial secretary; G. Odgers, president; W. R. Cremer, hon. gen. secretary.

Military Communique

NO NEWS has become the important news from Finland. Correspondents this week were so hardpressed that the big scoops disclosed how far away from the front most correspondents have been. Leland Stowe's dispatch, printed on page 10 of this issue, jibes with reports from other correspondents, such as Walter Kerr, in the New York *Herald Tribune,* Fletcher Pratt in the New York *Post.* Commonsense tells us that the military situation goes adversely for Mannerheim. The Salla front hasn't been heard from in two weeks. "Crucial battles" beyond Lake Ladoga were pooh-poohed as company clashes in the Soviet communique. The Finnish aerial attack on Kronstadt must have been a figment of someone's dream life; the capture of Pitkeranta, a town behind Soviet lines, zoomed in and out of the headlines. Perhaps the best comment on what's taking place is contained in an article by Major George Fielding Eliot, in the New York *Herald Tribune* for January 31:

Finland can probably be saved if she can have 100,000 good troops, a force of five hundred airplanes, and the necessary supplies and munitions. This means going far beyond anything that has so far been attempted; it probably means a serious Allied involvement in the Northern war; it may mean the abandonment of neutrality by Sweden and Norway in favor of belligerency against both Russia and Germany.

Thoughts on the News

Selected readings from Thomas Jefferson, Karl Marx, and Henri Barbusse.

THE *Times* of London and the New York *Times* have not changed much in their handling of war news since Karl Marx wrote the following letter to Friedrich Engels, on June 7, 1864, while our Civil War was going on:

The American news seems to me to be very good, and I was particularly delighted with today's leader in the *Times* [of London], in which it proves that Grant is being beaten continuously and will possibly be punished for his defeats—by the capture of Richmond.

Over a hundred years ago Thomas Jefferson became worried about irresponsible editing of the news in American newspapers. In a letter to J. Norvell in 1807, Jefferson wrote:

Nothing can now be believed which is seen in a newspaper. Truth itself becomes suspicious by being put into that polluted vehicle. The real extent of this state of misinformation is known only to those who are in situations to confront facts within their knowledge with the lies of the day. I really look with commiseration over the great body of my fellow citizens, who, reading newspapers, live and die in the belief that they have known something of what has been passing in the world in their time; whereas the accounts they have read in newspapers are just as true a history of any other period of the world as of the present, except that the real names of the day are affixed to their fables. General facts may indeed be collected from them, such as that Europe is now at war, that Bonaparte has been a successful warrior . . . but no details can be relied on. I will add that the man who never looks into a newspaper is better informed than he who reads them; inasmuch as he who knows nothing is nearer to truth than he whose mind is filled with falsehoods and errors. . . .

Perhaps an editor might begin a reformation in some such way as this. Divide his paper into four chapters, heading the first, Truths; second, Probabilities; third, Possibilities; fourth, Lies. The first chapter would be very short.

Later, in 1814, after the American papers had handled their first war (of 1812), Jefferson wrote to Dr. D. W. Jones:

I deplore . . . the putrid state into which our newspapers have passed, and the malignity, the vulgarity, and mendacious spirit of those who write them. . . . These ordures are rapidly depraving the public taste.

In the trenches during Imperial War I, Henri Barbusse gave the poilus' analysis of war-reporting in this excerpt from *Under Fire,* dated 1916:

"They're journalists," says Tirette.

"Journalists?"

"Why, yes, the individuals that lay the newspapers. You don't seem to catch on, fathead. Newspapers *must* have chaps to write 'em."

"Then it's those that stuff up our craniums?" says Marthereau.

Barque assumes a shrill treble, and pretending that he has a newspaper, recites——

" 'The Crown Prince is mad, after having been killed at the beginning of the campaign, and meanwhile he has all the diseases you can name. William will die this evening, and again tomorrow. The Germans have no more munitions and are chewing wood. They cannot hold out, according to the most authoritative calculations, beyond the end of the week. We can have them when we like, with their rifles slung. If one can wait a few days longer, there will be no desire to forsake the life of the trenches. One is so comfortable there, with water and gas laid on, and showerbaths at every step. The only drawback is that it is rather too hot in winter. As for the Austrians, they gave in a long time since and are only pretending.' For fifteen months now it's been like that, and you can hear the editor saying to his scribes, 'Now, boys, get into it! Find some way of brushing that up again for me in five secs, and make it spin out all over those four damned white sheets that we've got to mucky.' "

An Immoral Embargo

IT IS pleasant to be holier than thou, but the steel interests have a practical purpose in pointing out that even a moral embargo can have a capitalistically immoral effect. American steel needs Soviet manganese and if the Soviets invoke a "moral embargo" against the United States, it would be too bad for steel's pocketbooks. Thus *Standard Facts and Forecasts,* published daily by the Standard Statistics Co., says on January 6:

The United States, notwithstanding the casual way in which Washington discusses and invokes restrictions on our trade with countries we do not like, is not the only nation that can play the moral embargo game with telling effect. Were Russia, for example, to counter our moral embargo on molybdenum sales to it with an edict barring further sales of manganese to the United States, there is not much question as to which would be the greater loser. Practically speaking, molybdenum is an aid rather than an essential in steel manufacture. Russia probably could get along quite nicely with no more of it than she has now. But there literally is no way in which our steel industry could function without manganese. And, in 1938, 80,673 tons (manganese content) of the 234,169 tons of manganese imported into the United States came from Russia. In 1937 the figure was 186,736 out of 446,437 tons. It is likely that we have enough manganese on hand to get along for several months without any further shipments from Russia. At the end of 1938 stocks in bonded United States warehouses were equal to about a year's requirements at the 1937 rate. But once these reserves were used up, the steel industry could expect to find itself in a difficult spot. The Gold Coast, our secondary source of supply, might be able to bridge part of the gap. Cuba could ship us more than she has during the recent past. But it is doubtful that our non-Russian sources of manganese could be built up as fast and as much as they would need to be to prevent stiff penalization of the steel trade via the price if not the scarcity route.

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The One Way Anti-Trust Law

The Sherman Anti-Trust Act, which never jailed a monopolist, is now used to smash the trade unions. Debs' precedent.

THE indictment, under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, of Joseph P. Ryan, head of the International Longshoreman's Association, and other ILA and Teamsters Union officials, is a devious step in Roosevelt's war preparations. It is part of the administration's program for completely subjugating labor when M-day arrives.

The charges against Ryan and the Teamster officials follow a series of prosecutions against local leaders of the various building trade unions. Assistant Attorney General Arnold has been careful to pick on union leaders known to have unsavory connections with employing interests and racketeers. This gives his campaign, at the outset, the appearance of an attack on corrupt trade unionists only. But the history of anti-trust legislation is proof enough that the current prosecutions, if successful, will empower the administration to deprive labor of its right to determine by collective bargaining the conditions under which it will work.

No monopolist of big business ever was sent to jail for violating the anti-trust laws. That honor was reserved for Eugene V. Debs, found guilty of operating a monopoly in restraint of trade in the form of the American Railway Union. The Supreme Court early evolved the remarkable doctrine that a monopoly whose effect was "beneficial" was not in violation of the laws. (This so-called "Rule of Reason," however, was not applied in the case of labor organizations.) After more than forty years of anti-trust legislation, monopoly is more strongly entrenched than ever before.

A flagrant judicial distortion of the Sherman act occurred in the Danbury Hatters Case, in 1908. The United Hatters were assessed triple damages for violating the act. Thousands of union members had to sell their homes and personal belongings to pay the costs. The wide indignation aroused by this case finally led to the inclusion of a clause in the Clayton act of 1914:

> The labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce. Nothing contained in the anti-trust laws shall be construed to forbid the existence and operation of labor, agricultural, or horticultural organizations instituted for the purpose of mutual help, or to forbid or restrain individual members from lawfully carrying out the legitimate objects thereof, nor shall such organizations or the members thereof be held or construed to be illegal combinations or conspiracies in restraint of trade.

These plain words, however, did not prevent the Supreme Court from holding that if the objectives of trade union activities were illegal in terms of the Sherman and Clayton acts, the unions could be subject to prosecution.

Let us, then, examine those labor policies which Mr. Arnold, arrogating to himself the position of a judge, has declared to be unreasonable and illegal restraints of trade:

1. Preventing the use of cheaper material, improved equipment, or more efficient methods. Labor, then, has no right to restrict the use of cheaper materials even if they are non-union. Thus the sympathetic strike, an important weapon of labor solidarity, is outlawed. Furthermore, this would establish the employer's right to introduce rationalization, speedup, new techniques, and pocket all the profits from these technological advances. It would bar collective bargaining to prevent these changes from causing lower wages and unemployment, and would outlaw strikes called to prevent rationalization at the expense of the workers.

2. Compelling the hiring of useless and unnecessary labor. But what is useless and unnecessary labor? Since a man may be physically able to work sixteen hours a day, is it not (from the employer's standpoint) useless and unnecessary to employ two men, working eight hours each? If the Mine Workers strike for a six- instead of seven-hour day, the millowners—according to Mr. Arnold's interpretation of the anti-trust law—could contend that the Mine Workers were violating the law by compelling the hiring of an additional man for every six now employed.

3. Destroying an established and legitimate system of collective bargaining. This clause, introduced ostensibly to deal with the unpopular jurisdictional strike, would have a devastating effect on honest trade-unionism in those numerous cases where an employer recognizes and collectively bargains with a company union or reasonable facsimile thereof. A legitimate union embarking upon a strike to win its fight for recognition would find itself trying to explain to the courts that it was not attempting to destroy an established and legitimate collective bargaining setup.

4. Making agreements to fix prices. Such agreements, when they deal with a situation where prices are intimately tied up with wages and union conditions, may be necessary to protect the fair employer and his union employees against open shop chiselers. If such price-fixing arrangements are illegally made, however, the illegal acts are committed by the employers, not the union, and can be prosecuted adequately under criminal conspiracy charges.

5. Being parties to graft or extortion. There are adequate statutes on the books against graft and extortion. Why prosecute under the anti-trust laws—unless the administration is not gunning for crooked labor leaders, but for labor itself?

As eminent a legal authority as Henry Epstein, solicitor general of the State of New York, declared in a speech before the Conference on Labor Problems of the National Lawyers Guild, January 12:

> The answer [to corrupt labor practices] should be found in such statutes as criminal conspiracy laws which might be applicable, in contempt proceedings, and also in the power of equity courts to enjoin coercive acts designed to force unlawful ends. In no case, however, should it be found necessary so to distort the purpose of the anti-trust laws as to bring their weapons to bear upon labor. . . . This would seem to be an attempt by a legal paleontologist to reconstruct from a single ancient fossil, the skeleton of a prehistoric mastodon with which to terrorize labor unions into abject submission.

In undertaking these prosecutions, Mr. Arnold, on behalf of the administration, is seeking arbitrarily to amend the Supreme Court dictum in the Apex Hosiery case that the anti-trust law can only be applied in the case of restraints of trade which are (1) unreasonable, (2) direct and intentional, and (3) involve interstate commerce. The court declared the acts inapplicable in cases where restraints are essentially local in motive and effect—and that covers the efforts of unionists to maintain and improve local wages and conditions of work.

Arnold's invocation of the anti-trust laws against the AFL dovetails with the FBI's threat to prosecute CIO unions for sabotage; the use of legal technicalities to persecute Communists; and the numerous anti-alien measures already passed by the House of Representatives.

It must be remembered, however, that the alliances with employing interests and racketeers which permeate all the way into the AFL Executive Council give a powerful weapon to those who would destroy labor under the pretext of correcting labor abuses. President William Green claims that union autonomy prevents his cleaning out corruption and racketeering. But union autonomy is never a consideration with Mr. Green when an AFL union is suspected of nurturing a Communist officer or wants to undertake local cooperation with the CIO. Green's entire political machine is based on the support he receives from racketeering elements. The job of cleaning out these elements is one for the AFL membership. DAVID RICHARDS.

Before the War

"THE greatest and most powerful of the so-called democracies is in reality a great empire ruled at present by coldblooded, reactionary imperialists. The action of Britain and France in settling the last war was coldblooded and imperialistic in the extreme. They created and maintained the conditions which bred Mussolini and Hitler. They fought against the Soviet Union. . . .

"Why should anyone be surprised or disillusioned at the latest turn of events? The truth is that these great 'democracies' are not Galahads who can be depended upon to support the cause of the people. In spite of the wide democratic forces within each, they are still capitalist empires, in which the forces of reaction are always strong enough to use national policy for their own ends. Any new world war will be like the last one, a war of competing imperialisms, and it will end as disastrously for democracy."—*"New Republic," March 2, 1938.*

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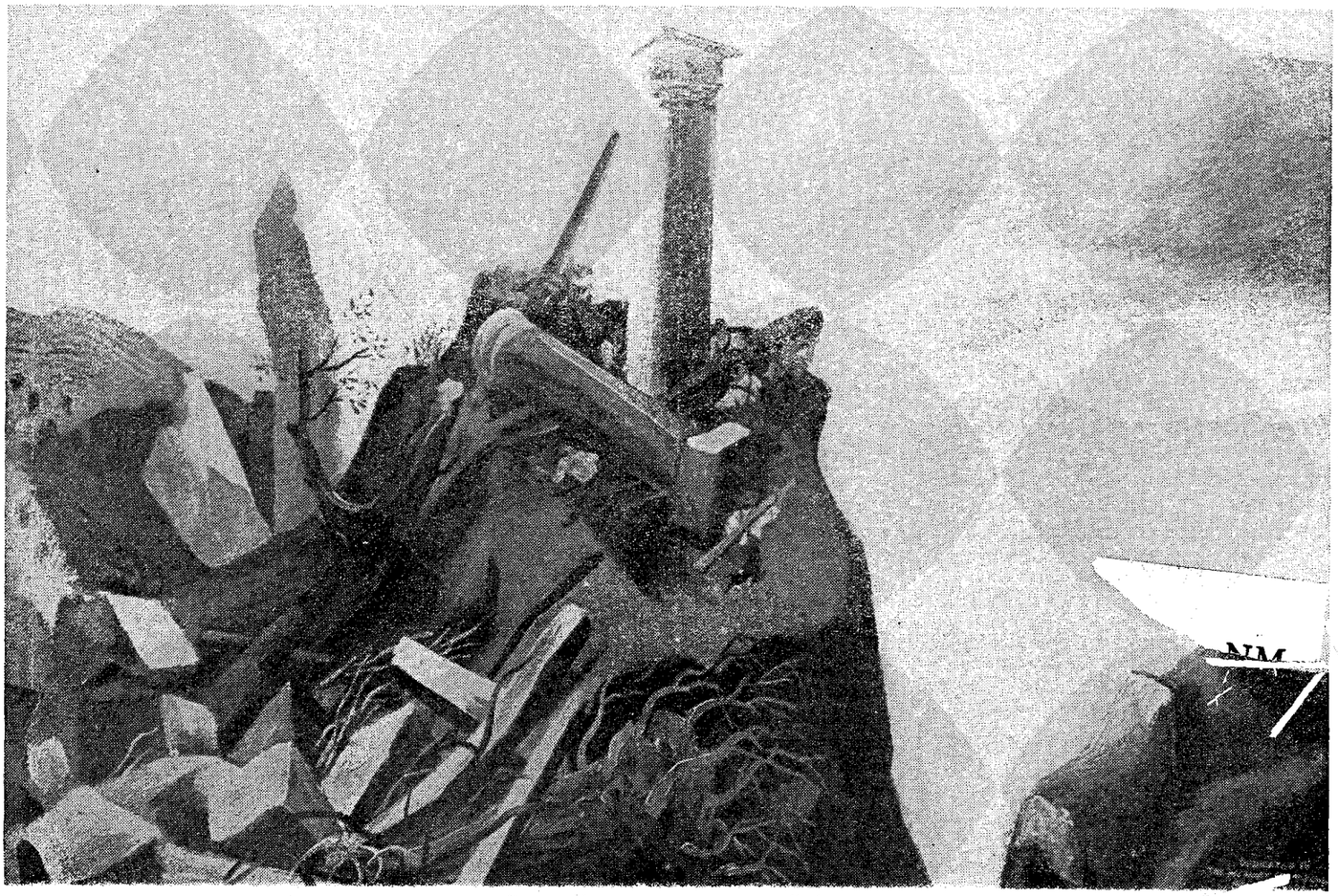

"THERE'S MUCH TO BE DONE" (DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF MOISSAYE J. OLGIN)

ART PATRONS

Gropper Month

WITHOUT any previous publicity, or special ukases from the White House, NEW MASSES hereby decrees that the month of February is William Gropper Month. Here are some of the new paintings from his one-man show which opens at the ACA Gallery, 52 West 8th St., New York City, on February 10 and extends to March 2. The other big event in Gropper Month is the gala meeting February 17 which marks his twentieth anniversary as a people's artist. That night at Mecca Temple the quality of the cultural and political worlds will stand up and have something to say about Gropper. A movie short will show the cartoonist at work. If Gropper can get away from his drawing board for the night, the celebration will be complete.

BACKSTAGE

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NEW MASSES
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Delayed Dollars

F. D.R.'s subterfuge plan whereby the Export-Import Bank's loan authorization would be raised to $100,000,000, out of which Jesse Jones would sneak some small change to Mannerheim, is meeting diverse opposition. Organizations such as the National Maritime Union, the New York Council of the American Youth Congress, last week rapped the idea as a step toward war. Sen. Pat Harrison, of Mississippi, came forward with a plan for a private bond flotation for the Finns. "How can I go home," he asked, "and look my farmers in the face, and say to them: 'Boys, I couldn't vote for your parity payments because I had to help Finland?'" However obliquely, this attitude reflects popular understanding of the contrast between Roosevelt's assault upon social services at home and encouragement to war abroad. The real test of the loan proposal, public or private, is whether it serves the cause of American neutrality. The answer is no. American support to Mannerheim ensures the extension of the war into Scandinavia; it bolsters every anti-Soviet aspiration in Europe; it strengthens the forces that gear American economy for war involvement. The purchase of $10,000,000 worth of American planes by a Swedish arms mission and the sharp jump in American trade with Sweden, Norway, and Turkey, emphasize full well how American economic support dovetails with Allied military and political strategy in the European conflict.

They Also Serve

SOME idea of who's who and what's what in this Finnish business can be gleaned from a survey of the loan boosters. Dorothy Thompson took an extra-curricular assignment last week to plug for the dollars in Newark, N. J. Bishop Manning extended his bishopric authority to insist upon congressional haste. Gen. John O'Ryan, retired, organized a committee for the purchase of munitions proper; thus far he has enough cash for a few propellers. Perhaps the greatest single Soviet victory can be credited to the kaiser himself. Through an octogenarian amanuensis, Wilhelm suggested that the war be redirected against Soviet Russia before it's too late. That must have given Mr. Hoover a Helsink-ing feeling. Perhaps the best publicity stunt so far is the import of Paavo Nurmi and Taesto Maki, noted Finnish athletes; but arms-running rather than marathon footwork is needed at this stage of the game. Baron Mannerheim's sister, Countess Sparre, added a travel note to the business; her arrival bolsters the Miami and Sun Valley sectors on the Karelian Isthmus. Now that she's here, it sure looks bad for Stalin.

Robeson Speaks Out

IN A Broadway racked by disputes over relief for its own destitute or relief for the Finnish White Guards, Paul Robeson's great voice rang out last week. The distinguished singer and actor flatly refused to appear in benefits for the Hoover-Mannerheim fund. Said Robeson:

> I feel England's influence is pronounced in Scandinavian countries and this influence is reactionary, not democratic. It possibly may have inspired the Finnish hostilities, which simply means that Russia is fighting a defensive war. According to my reasoning, aid to the Finns then, in reality, is aid to the reactionary forces, which, if the Allies win the war, still would leave world problems, the problems of the oppressed in the colonies, the problems of the workers, unsolved. The progressive policies of the liberals in all countries are not represented by the Chamberlain, Daladier, or Mannerheim governments.

Will Geer, now playing Jeeter Lester in *Tobacco Road,* seconded Mr. Robeson's position with the statement that "participation in Finnish benefits opens the channel for participation in the war. I believe that our first consideration should be to relieve the destitute and unemployed in our own profession." Abstentions from the list of Broadway benefits for the banker-dominated Finnish relief have been numerous. They include the productions *Little Foxes, The Male Animal, See My Lawyer.* The National Vaudeville Artists held a relief benefit for its own unemployed. *Tobacco Road's* company voted eleven to seven against the Finnish benefit. The Forrest Theater will house a relief performance for Southern sharecroppers soon. According to Leonard Lyons, in the New York *Post* of January 30, John Steinbeck, author of *The Grapes of Wrath,* has asked Mr. Hoover where he was when Ethiopia, Spain, and China were being bombed.

The UMWA Leads

THE United Mine Workers of America celebrated its fiftieth birthday with a declaration of independence. John L. Lewis, its president, served notice that: (1) labor is not in the pocket of any politician or political party; (2) "labor wants no war or any part of it, and will hold to strict accountability any statesman who departs from this policy."

Lewis spoke for the 2,400 delegates at the biennial convention, representing 600,000 members of the nation's largest trade union. The convention resolutions took a similar position. The United Mine Workers thus steps forward, as it has so often in the past, to leadership of the trade union movement.

The newspapers have made much of Lewis' attack on President Roosevelt. They have labored everything but the obvious—that Roosevelt has deserted the program which won him the support of organized labor. At a press conference during the convention Lewis said: "The important question is not who will be the presidential candidate, but what the Democratic Party proposes to do for the country." If the Roosevelt budget and other recent administration acts are any criterion, the Democratic Party proposes to do just about what the Republican Party proposes to do: starve the people and feed the war machine. When Lewis and the miners refuse to go along with that program, they express the deepest interests not alone of the American workers, but of the majority of farmers and middle-class people.

Clouds over the Rising Sun

JAPAN'S critical international position revealed more and more of its domestic background last week. Protest over rice shortages and food price speculation was in part responsible for the resignation of the Abe Cabinet in January. Rationing of power was decreed this week to begin on February 10, but reports reveal that towns like Kobe, Kyoto, Osaka, and Yokohama, in which most of Japan's industries are located, have already been suffering shutdowns every third day because of power shortages.

Popular discontent was dramatized last week when Takao Saito, leading Minseito Party member, challenged the government with the query: "The China War has exacted great sacrifices from the Japanese people, but what have they received in return?" Saito questioned whether the New Order in East Asia could achieve lasting peace, implicitly lambasted Wang Ching-wei's puppet outfit, and called for the withdrawal of Japanese troops to permit a negotiated settlement. So sensational was this bombshell considered that Saito has been read out of his party, and faces expulsion from the Diet. His speech was censored within Japan; one deputy declared that he had "belittled Japan's holy war and defiled the souls of hundreds of thousands of dead."

Meanwhile, the Soviet-Japanese border commission suspended its work after sixteen sittings since mid-December because of a "total divergence of viewpoint." Foreign Minister Arita's speech makes clear that Japan intends to continue its program; Chinese rail communications from French Indo-China were bombed last week with the loss of one hundred lives. Taken together with renewed blockade of the British Tientsin concession, this may foreshadow heavier Japanese pressure on the Allied colonial possessions.

Japan was reported contracting for Mexican oil this week; this will hardly compensate for her uncertainty over the future of American trade relations. Washington holds the sword of Damocles over Japan's economy. Whether it will be used in the interests of

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China's independence or merely to assure the predominance of American imperialism over its rivals, becomes a major issue before the American people.

Sugar-Coated Pills

AMERICA'S sick and lame and halt had no cause for rejoicing last week as their President scuttled the notable 1938 social health plan devised by his own experts. The Wagner Health Bill's proposal for an $800,000,000 appropriation has been diminished to the zero point. For the sake of appearances, Roosevelt requested Congress to appropriate a maximum of $10,000,000—one-eightieth of the original amount—for the construction of fifty small hospitals.

Mr. Roosevelt, according to his personal secretary, was "quite sentimental" about sending his hospital message to Congress on his own birthday. But the tories of the American Medical Association hailed his action; only a year ago they had wrathfully rejected his message of Jan. 21, 1938, on health security. The President had quoted his own Interdepartmental Committee to Safeguard Health and Welfare Activities, admitted the lack of essential resources for the prevention and care of sickness. Public health services, he said, are largely undeveloped in many rural areas and grossly inadequate in cities. Hospital services for persons with low incomes are insufficient, while many hospital beds lie empty for want of paying patients. Deadly diseases take their toll for lack of medical care. To check these ravages, Mr. Roosevelt, intent on the expenditure of billions for war, asks a pitiful sum, equivalent to the addition of five thousand hospital beds. Of such stuff is presidential sentimentality made.

Balkan Rendezvous

THE meeting of the Balkan entente involved aspects of Allied war strategy against Germany and the USSR even more than the problems of the Balkan nations themselves. With the exception of Yugoslavia, the nations represented are bound to England and France by the guarantees of last April. Bulgaria and Hungary were not present: their territorial ambitions at the expense of Rumania prevent any enduring unity among the Danubian states. Italian and Turkish ambitions clash on a different level; Turkey took a leading stand at the entente conference countered by Yugoslavia, more or less guardian of Italy's interests. Allied favor has smiled upon the Turks in the form of cool cash; they are being used as pawns to offset Mussolini's bargaining position.

At the very outset, M. Saracoglu, the Turkish foreign minister, admitted that his nation's neutrality was fictitious; Turkey may be considered a belligerent whose soldiers are not yet fighting. This has an ominous meaning since the Turks control the Dardanelles and border on Soviet oil fields. Overshadowing inner Balkan irritations is the Allied strategy of reducing all neutrals to Turkey's position. London must now undo, if it can, the damage wrought by its own free-hand to the Nazis which gave Germany the predominant economic position in Southeastern Europe. German pressure upon Rumania for oil undoubtedly continues; NEW MASSES' editorial (February 6) discussed this in detail. More significant is the fact that *the initiative for aligning the Balkan nations into a war front now comes from London and Paris.* Arms shipments to Rumania, guaranteed by treaty, are being held up; the exclusion of Rumanian exports from England is threatened, if Bucharest does not adopt the "realistic" attitude. In pursuance of wider strategic designs against both Germany and the USSR, the gentlemen who chatter about the integrity of small nations place their own ally in the nutcracker. Whether Balkan solidarity represents an obstacle to the Allied path, or simply expresses an effort to force higher bidding from London, remains to be seen.

The Farmers Get Kicked

ONCE upon a time a little boy pushed another little boy down a flight of stairs. A third little boy came along and pinched the arm of the little boy who had been pushed down, as he lay bawling. Whereupon the first little boy, who had done the pushing, was very angry at the callous brutality of the third little boy.

We are reminded of this story by the fine magisterial indignation of President Roosevelt at the action of the House of Representatives in cutting $66,900,000 out of his agricultural bill. He had wanted farm funds cut only $413,056,518 below the amount in the current fiscal year!

Among the allocations eliminated by the House is the picayune $25,000,000 for farm tenant aid. Evidently the gentlemen of the House want the grapes of wrath stored even higher than at present. But there is, after all, no difference in principle between the President and the House. There is only a minor difference as to the speed with which the farmers—who are still waiting for that war boom around the corner—will be pitchforked into ruin. The farmers' battle shifts to the Senate—and to the countryside, where they need to learn to gather in the harvest of their own strength.

Youth Pilgrimage

THE democratic faith of Abraham Lincoln will be green and strong at the annual American Youth Congress pilgrimage to be held in Washington February 9-12. The young people who will gather there from all parts of the country have dedicated themselves to the quest for "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." John D. M. Hamilton, chairman of the Republican National Committee, doesn't think these youngsters are fit company for aged-in-the-wood Mark Hanna Republicans unless they purge themselves of "communistic organizations and elements." But the young folk have heard that rebel yell before.

The New York section of the American Youth Congress has sounded what we hope will be the keynote of the national gathering. At a meeting attended by more than one thousand delegates it overwhelmingly opposed loans to the Finnish Mannerheim regime, condemned the Roosevelt budget, and pledged itself to a program of peace, jobs, and civil liberties. The meeting approved as a slogan: "The Yanks Are *Not* Coming."

The young people are moving fast and showing an awareness of real issues that their elders might well emulate. The Roosevelt budget cuts National Youth Administration funds by $15,000,000 and CCC funds by $60,000,000. This is in addition to the heavy reductions in appropriations for WPA and other social services. At the same time the administration tips its hand by attempting to convert the NYA into a recruiting agency for the army. The NYA recently announced that it had requested state NYA directors to turn over to the Army Recruiting Service a list of all male enrollees between eighteen and twenty-five. This is the pot of gold at the end of the New Deal rainbow: hunger or war. But the young people gathering in Washington this week are determined that there shall be other alternatives.

Get Together, Boys!

REMEMBER the days when business implored the President to restore its "confidence" by giving it a "breathing spell" from his "tinkering" with social reform? Now the bigwigs of the AFL, ponderously meeting in executive session in not-so-warm Miami, last week emitted the following:

> At this time there are not enough jobs in private industry to go around. This is largely due, in our opinion, to the fact that lack of confidence has stunted business growth and expansion. We demand that those in authority take whatever steps may be necessary to restore business confidence. . . . When opportunities for profit diminish, opportunities for jobs likewise disappear. . . . Of all the factors upon which the prosperity of industry depends, none is more important than confidence.

Confidence, according to this definition, means increased profits. C. F. Hughes, New York *Times* market analyst, quotes (February 4) the National City Bank's current bulletin which makes a preliminary estimate for 370 leading manufacturing companies. Net profits in 1939 returned 7.5 upon net worth as against 3.6 in 1938. With the largest utility excluded, *1939 gains for one hundred corporations were doubled over 1938.*

Says Mr. Hughes, with some slyness: "A conclusion to be reached from these calculations is that the argument about lack of profit holding up new capital investment and prosperity will have to be revised in some manner. Profit is accepted as the keystone of confidence and investment, and here are the profits."

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The Truth about Dies

A GOLD BRICK found its way into the *Congressional Record* the other day. Rep. Frank Hook of Michigan read into the *Record* a letter purporting to link Rep. Martin Dies with William Dudley Pelley, fuehrer of the Silver Shirts. The letter had been purchased by Gardner Jackson, legislative representative of Labor's Non-Partisan League, and Harold Weisberg, his associate, from David Mayne, a Pelley lieutenant to whom it was addressed. A few days later Mayne appeared before a secret session of the Dies committee and swore that he had forged the letter.

To anyone with even a modicum of knowledge of impolite society this incident has all the signs of a plant. Add to this the fact that Mayne was for a time on the Dies committee payroll. Rep. Vito Marcantonio of New York has demanded that the House launch a "prompt investigation" of the whole matter. Representative Hook has asked Attorney General Jackson for a grand jury investigation.

It is evident that whoever was responsible for getting Mayne to concoct this forgery was interested in discrediting the exposure of Martin Dies and his committee. Dies certainly needs a diversion of this kind badly. Neither he nor his committee has been able to deny the most important of the charges which Representative Hook made on the House floor—that Dies has been associated with persons close to the terrorist Christian Front, particularly Merwin K. Hart, chairman of the New York State Economic Council, friend of Father Coughlin, and patron of assorted varieties of fascist organizations.

"City of Flint"

THE long-delayed truth about the *City of Flint* was revealed last week when the cargo vessel steamed into Baltimore. Ernest Moorer, feature writer for the *Daily Worker,* interviewed members of the crew, and attended Captain Gainard's press conference. He reports (*Daily Worker,* January 30) that the Soviet authorities were wholly proper in their dealings with the ship, that the furore was manufactured between the ship's captain and the State Department.

No sooner did the ship land at the USSR, according to crew members and the captain himself, but what it was free to sail, the Nazi crew having been interned. Gainard, notorious for his anti-union actions in the *Algic* "mutiny case" of last spring, preferred to remain in Murmansk. He held the crew's papers, demanded naval escorts of Soviet officials, and generally behaved like a member of the Dies committee.

Although the State Department did everything it could to inflate alleged Soviet "discourtesies" into an international incident, it's clear now that Washington blurbed its stories before all facts were on hand. G. E. R. Gedye, New York *Times* Moscow correspondent, denied at the time that Soviet authorities had been dilatory in securing the full facts. We know now that the Maritime Commission published anti-Soviet broadsides even before the State Department. Lawyers specializing in such matters insisted that the Soviet government was adhering to the law covering suspected contraband carriers. Apologies are in order to the Soviet Union and the American people.

MAJOR NERTZ OF THE FASCIST SHIRTS

"Always some Utopian scheme to throttle business. Now, by God, it's honesty in advertising."

The Fight Goes On

TO MANY the passing of the American League for Peace and Democracy has brought a personal pang. In the more than six years of its existence it had become not merely the most important peace organization in the country, but a potent symbol of the united front.

Yet the decision of the League's national board to cease all activities was entirely in keeping with the League's own objective of defending democracy and peace.

For years the American League worked to prevent war. Its record of achievement during these years is one of which every officer and member, every progressive can be proud. But the outbreak of the war and the resultant increased attack on civil liberties have, as the

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national board put it, "created a situation in which a different program and type of organization are needed to preserve democratic rights in wartime and thereby help keep the United States out of war."

For the American League to have clung to a purely vestigial existence would have served no useful purpose. The American League had its roots in the people. So it makes way for the kind of program and organization that the people now need. This means not the end of the united front, but its organization on a new basis.

Altogether fitting was the testimonial given to the League's chairman, that grand crusader for peace and civil liberties, Dr. Harry F. Ward. In his farewell speech Dr. Ward lashed at the Dies committee and at the fair-weather liberals who have deserted the fight for progress. NEW MASSES joins in wishing him many years of continued fruitful work. His was a unique bravery in the face of reactionary fire; an uncommon devotion to his organization under attack; a clearheaded understanding of what America needs in the troubled times that face us. The American League is dead, but the fight for peace and democracy goes on.

New York's Budget

ON FEBRUARY 12, at noon, hearings on the New York State budget for 1940-41 begin in Albany. This proposed budget is a characteristic product of the type of national unity—at the people's expense—urged by President Roosevelt. Governor Lehman called a political truce with the Republican majority in the legislature, joined with their leader in framing a budget embodying many of their most reactionary objectives—and failed to appease them.

One of the budget's chief shortcomings is its failure to provide for an immediate appropriation to restore the schedule of state aid for education and highways cut at the last legislative session. This has been urged by many progressive groups. Instead the budget merely resumes the schedule of state aid in the new fiscal year 1940-41. Departmental appropriations have been cut so low that even such an experienced budget-slasher as Assemblyman Abbot Low Moffat, the GOP's financial expert, has declared that the cost of government has been reduced to the lowest possible figure. Further reductions, he said, must be made at the expense of state services. Yet further reductions are what the Republicans want.

Governor Lehman himself helped contribute to the success of such a campaign by framing an emergency income tax measure which put a disproportionately heavy burden on the lower middle classes, a disproportionately light one on the wealthy. The GOP hopes to use middle class revulsion against this tax to introduce further budget cuts. The CIO and other progressive organizations are demanding that the proposed emergency income tax be revised according to the ability to pay.

Readers' Forum

Blake and Bates

TO NEW MASSES: William Blake's article in your January 23 issue, effectively replying to Ralph Bates' reasons for deserting Communism, served to ease my conscience as a USSR well-wisher. However, why all the circumlocution? As an attorney, I like syllabi. Why could not Blake have summarized his argument in one cogent paragraph, like this?

"All peoples agree that defensive wars are moral and justified. The incontrovertible facts of recent history prove that the Finnish campaign is essentially—and emphatically—socialism's first great *defensive* international war, against an inevitably impending war against it by the capitalist-controlled nations. The latter nations have elected to gang up at every critical opportunity with the fascist nations against the only socialist nation. To all appearances, Finland was planned as the starting point for this capitalistic war of aggression. . . . But should not the Soviet, as a moral example among the nations, have avoided war at all costs? Though *Realpolitik* was invoked when the colonists took America from the Indians and the North outlawed slavery by bloodshed, have we not progressed since then? This may be answered by an illustration: Suppose I, a weak youngster in a country school, am invited to rely on a strong alleged-buddy against the threats of a bunch of bullies. If the supposed friend deserts me time after time when the gang gets after me, am I to refrain from grabbing a baseball bat to defend myself at last? . . . With capitalist nations as well as individuals, the law of the jungle still prevails!"

Maybe this writer has only a puerile mind, but many others do too; and it seems to me that such admirable articles as Mr. Blake's should be made much clearer; in answer to the unfortunate attitude, too, of the *New Republic,* to which I subscribe and with which I usually agree, except in this Finnish matter.

JOHN R. KEISTER.

Greensburg, Pa.

Canada's Ruling Class

TO NEW MASSES: Yes, the ruling class has learned much since the great October Revolution in the organization and strategy and technique of reaction. To the service of their overwhelming power they have brought an immensely enhanced finesse that turns the devil green with envy. A recognition of this fact—of the tremendous difficulties at present in the way of any concerted action by the progressive forces of the world—is probably not excluded from the reasons for the recent Soviet diplomatic moves.

That section of the ruling class which is most class-conscious, experienced, and diabolically effective with its finesse is the British ruling class. It works on the principle of the Northwest Mounted Police, that prevention is better than cure. Its Canadian representatives are not far behind the Chamberlain gang in the smooth, anticipatory, preventive measures slipped over to prevent "subversive" activities which you crude Americans frequently permit to reach the point at which the forces of "law and order" have to become vulgarly violent: From the banks of the St. Lawrence Canada's ruling class exercises an economic and political control of the whole country not approached by the domination of the United States by your 1/10 of 1 percent; and it takes of Canada's wealth more than double the share that your "economic royalists" grab of United States wealth. Apart from the quite fascist countries, we are the most exploited of the bourgeois democracies. But it is done with superlative finesse. We are nonplussed and acquiescent—all but the real Bolsheviks. Americans *do* put up a fight now and then, thanks to the CIO.

I offer these facts merely as the reason why I cannot help you with more than my subscription to the livest periodical on this continent. This subscription I will keep up as long as you can publish and I can eat.

As with you—perhaps even more so—the strain on our local people is becoming terrific. We've got to keep the *Advocate* ou the streets as long as possible. While the Communist Party is still legal, outside of Quebec, actually we are underground—in the most progressive province of the Dominion. The new "Canada Defense Act" does this nicely.

As to the ban, they can ban anything under this act, if and when they want to. *The History of the CPSU* is verboten, and all party periodicals are banned from the newsstands. I am still receiving NEW MASSES regularly by mail on my subscription; but our one little "New Age Bookshop" is deprived of all the radical and Soviet periodicals on which it depended to break even, though this shop still is open for the sale of the stock on hand and such other books and pamphlets as can be smuggled in. They can no longer get the British *Labour Monthly* or *World News and Views,* though these reach me through my own subscription.

All mail to and from Australia is censored. Hitherto they have not—so far as I know—begun on our first class mail. If they do, I'll have to send you enough postage to get NEW MASSES first class in sealed containers, as long as I can get away with that. I am so well known for my progressive tendencies that if I were not a veteran of the last war I could not hold my job.

On account of my aforesaid "subversive" proclivities, and because I am American born (naturalized) this may be my last letter to escape the censor.

J. C. R.

Chicago Guild Strikers

TO NEW MASSES: I have received the following letter from the Hearst Strike Committee (231 South Wells St., Chicago), signed by Harry D. Wohl, international vice president of the American Newspaper Guild:

"In the early days of the Chicago strike you lent a sympathetic ear to the plea of the strikers for assistance.

"That strike, after fourteen months of incredible sacrifice, still goes on. Homes, automobiles, insurance policies, have been surrendered, but the will to win still burns like an undying flame. These people need immediate help if their sacrifices are not to be in vain. At the moment there are indications of a crack in Hearst's armor at last. It would be tragic then, with the goal so near, if all would have to be given up.

"I don't know what you can do, but any amount, no matter how small, will be a blessing. We also are in dire need of baby foods, vitamin compounds, and cod liver oil for our strikers' children. Please let me hear from you."

If you can reach out to physicians, pharmacists, laboratory and hospital workers, technicians, and allied professions, that would be fruitful.

H. W.

New York City.

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Sandburg's Lincoln

An epic biography of The Great Emancipator which makes the Civil War documents live again. A historical drama of the Man and the People.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE WAR YEARS, *by Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace & Co. Four volumes. $20.*

NO MONUMENT of bronze or stone inspires more reverence than Sandburg's biography of Lincoln. It is a vast labor of love to which generations will pay homage for its grandeur, dignity, and drama. Now that it has been completed, after a lifetime of brooding and searching, we can see how inevitable was the conjunction of subject and author: Sandburg, the great American poet of democracy in our time, and Lincoln, the great democratic symbol of the American masses. It is an occasion for rejoicing.

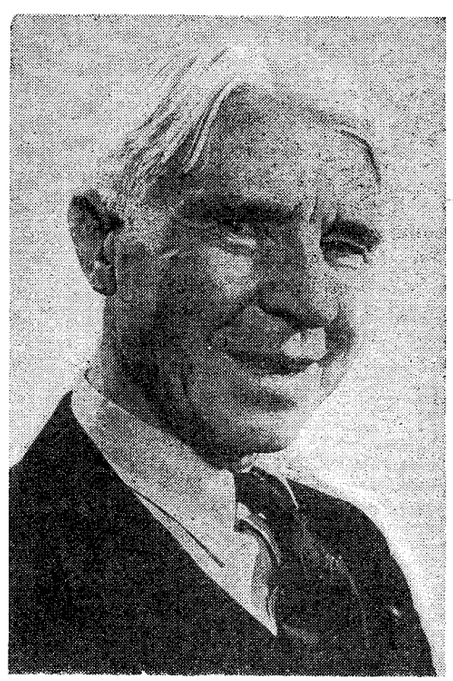
A history rather than a biography, wrote Lowell seventy-five years ago, would be required for recording the life of Lincoln. It was a sound judgment, which Sandburg has wisely heeded. For Lincoln's effort, particularly during the War Years, was interwoven with the huge process of people and events which found in him their chief expression. His true greatness consisted in his closeness to the common people. The "I" was dissolved in the "We." The International Workingmen's Association, through its German corresponding secretary Karl Marx, expressed its pride that "it fell to the lot of Abraham Lincoln, the single-minded son of the working class, to lead the country through the matchless struggle for the rescue of an enchained race and the reconstruction of a social world." In celebrating his life, one must sing not merely "a simple separate person"; one must "utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse." Lincoln was a people's spokesman, and as such he was large and he contained multitudes.

NEW PATTERN

Sandburg very properly, therefore, departs from the orthodox patterns of American biography. He creates a new literary form, as in *The People, Yes,* which is roomy enough to contain the contradictions and confusions of an epoch. Lincoln emerges as the central figure in a compendium of biographies which include Radicals like Sumner, Phillips, Stevens, and Fremont as well as Copperheads like Horatio Seymour and Fernando Wood; war profiteers like Jay Cooke and August Belmont as well as labor spokesmen in the Northern cities; Confederates like Davis and Toombs as well as Negro leaders like Douglass and Sojourner Truth; generals like McClellan and Grant, Lee and Jackson, as well as the anonymous men in the ranks. Scores of newspapers and magazines are repeatedly cited, from Greeley's anti-slavery *Tribune* to Bennett's pro-slavery *Herald,* from the London *Times* to the Cincinnati *Gazette.* Diaries and letters—ranging from the Confederate Mrs. Chesnutt to the revolutionary Karl Marx—handbills, drawings, poems, and songs form a part of the intricate picture. There are 414 halftones of photographs, 249 cuts of cartoons, letters, documents. Lincoln becomes a convergent expression of what millions of his contemporaries thought and said and did.

With such a multitude of details, the tempo is necessarily slow. It is far from being monotonous. The long drama has many climaxes. Lincoln's journey from Springfield to Washington is told with painstaking detail, but it is full of excitement and suspense. Impressions along every mile of the journey are minutely recorded—the response of each community, Lincoln's interviews with local dignitaries, the complex story of his threatened assassination at Baltimore—and by a magic of selection which Sandburg exercises throughout most of his 2,500 pages we are delighted by each detail at the same time that we breathe relief at Lincoln's safe arrival in the capital.

In the same way, much later on, we listen with patience and interest to the long roll call in Congress as it votes on the 13th Amendment, and we are ready to cheer with the gallery as the narrow margin of victory is finally announced. It is almost as if we were hearing it over the radio. And the details of the military operations revive the magical names—Bull Run, Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Vicksburg, Antietam, Chickamauga, Gettysburg—and give them a new meaning. For once, we have a story of the Civil War which integrates the military and political aspects of the campaign.



CARL SANDBURG. *The great poet of democracy in our time chronicles the life of our great historical symbol of democracy.*

HISTORICAL EMPHASIS

Yet the book must be criticized for a serious error of historical emphasis. One cannot quarrel with Sandburg's effort to restrain his personal opinions; he prefers to let the available evidence speak for itself, and the method is on the whole a good one for a work of this magnitude. But there is an underlying difficulty of orientation which seems particularly important to point out at this time. Sandburg does not analyze, nor does he make his material indicate with sufficient clarity, the fundamental character of the Civil War. It was, on the Northern side, a revolutionary war involving the struggle of a new class for undisputed state power. On the Confederate side, it was a counter-revolutionary and aggressive war fought by the planter class in the interest of consolidating their waning economic power. The plantation system fought against the growing discontent of poor whites and Negroes in the South as well as against the growing economic superiority of Northern industrialism. It was therefore not at all a "Rebellion" in the sense in which that word has been used in our textbooks. British capitalism, as represented by Palmerston and the London *Times,* was not sympathetic toward "rebels" but toward a semi-feudal class which might impede the rising industrial class in the North, Britain's inevitable competitor in the event of victory.

Emancipation was an indispensable step toward the victory of the revolution, and Radical Abolitionists like Sumner and Phillips who criticized Lincoln for not moving more quickly and decisively toward freeing the slaves deserve a more understanding treatment than Sandburg has provided. Lincoln accepted the position of the Radicals slowly; and even if one grants that there is room for disagreement on the timing, one must stress the basic historical rightness of the Abolitionist position. Lincoln also moved more slowly than Thaddeus Stevens on the question of suffrage for Negroes and Reconstruction; but here, too, it is far from reasonable to accept the assumption of orthodox historians that Lincoln would have followed the traitor

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course of Andrew Johnson. Lincoln was always moving under the compulsion of events and public opinion in the right direction, which was the successful termination of the Southern oligarchy's control coupled with the extension of complete social rights to the Negro.

The point is crucial. A fuller recognition of it would involve a more sympathetic treatment of the Northern root-and-branchers. It would lead to a somewhat less detached and conciliatory treatment of the Southern aristocracy. And, even more important, it would necessitate a more searching examination of the Negro's role in his own emancipation. On this issue, Sandburg's biographical method falls down, for he is here at the mercy of his documents. The absence of a strong Negro press, for example, almost inevitably means that the Negro point of view will suffer unless the historian brings to the documents a revolutionary analysis of the submerged population.

But beyond all this, the point is crucial because it involves our whole orientation to the problems that we today confront. For it cannot be denied, and Sandburg would probably be the last to deny, that certain issues of the Civil War remain unresolved. The Negro people are still deprived of their "constitutional rights"—a phrase which reminds us how deceptive a merely legalistic approach may be. The stranglehold of a minority over the people remains a reality. And the "malice toward none" doctrine is not reciprocated, as the opponents of anti-lynching legislation annually testify. Our attitude toward the issues of the Civil War helps to determine our attitude toward equally vital contemporary issues.

I do not intend, obviously, to give the impression that Sandburg's biography is illiberal in spirit or in effect. I do think that it fails to cut beneath certain assumptions that are embedded in the fabric of our institutions. And because these assumptions are so largely unchallenged by historians, it appears regrettable that this great book should not have been an even greater challenge.

One prefers to return to the striking virtues of the book—its hundreds and hundreds of pointed anecdotes by and about Lincoln, its splendid reconstruction of the costume and habit and geography of the time, its subtle suggestion of joy at Lincoln's reelection, and its communication of deep-felt grief at his untimely death. One cannot forget its portrait of a man who shared so much in the sorrows and exultations of his fellowmen, who was beyond all other American leaders a part of common humanity. It is a daring work, the epic conception of a poet, the consummation of a lifetime vision.

In the moment of world history through which we are living, one is grateful to Sandburg for having helped us understand the lines of his fellow-poet, Vachel Lindsay, in "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight." The words were written in Springfield during the first year of the World War. Lincoln is pacing up and down near the old courthouse; he lingers where his children once played; he stalks through the market, a bronzed lank man, wearing his suit of ancient black, his high tophat and plain worn shawl. He is unable to sleep:

His head is bowed. He thinks of men and kings.
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?
Too many peasants fight, they know not why,
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the warlords burn his heart.
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every main.
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders now
The bitterness, the folly, and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn
Shall come;—the shining hope of Europe free:
A league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp, and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,
That all his hours of travail here for men
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

On this seventy-fifth anniversary of Lincoln's death, can we not agree that his spirit is still restless for the work he could not complete? His spirit will not rest until we who revere him bring "white peace" to a truly free world, "A league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth."

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Thoroughbred Lowbrow

PERIOD PIECE: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ELLA WHEELER WILCOX, *by Jenny Ballou. Houghton Mifflin Co. $3.*

THE art of rediscovering the past has come to remarkable development when a provocative book can be written about Ella Wheeler Wilcox, the celebrated Hearst poetess and patron of soothsayers. Jenny Ballou's *Period Piece* is an epigrammatic note on late nineteenth century America, in which Ella was the Laureate, the "divine average," the shocking poetess of passion who came to her silverware salesman groom as a virgin at the age of twenty-eight.

Ella was no more asinine than the bourgeoisie of her time, and she had the startling faculty of believing passionately in the items of their morality. Barefoot girls could become great poetesses, venerated in England as well as in the plush parlors of Milwaukee, and at length serve as refinement for the editorial pages of the yellow press. Ella has left no poems, and her school, personified by Edgar A. Guest, is fast fading. The one chestnut the average person can recall—"Laugh and the world laughs with you, etc."—has a fine chance to be taken from her because a plagiarist, John A. Joyce, has had it cut on his tombstone, accredited to himself. Ella never wrote on tombstones. She was much more interested in tuning in with the infinite via the ouija board.

Miss Ballou's book is a comedy of the shallows of the American tradition—success worship, sub-literary culture, and the blindness contained in Ella's slogan, "Heart not Art." Her myth is moribund; scarcely a youth sub-

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scribes anymore to the hope that he may be President. There was the First Imperialist War and Ella's plea to the troops to "come back clean"; now we have another, final round of that war and the most hopeful advice to the troops is "come back."

JAMES DUGAN.

Transitional Criticism

THE NOVEL AND THE MODERN WORLD, *by David Daiches. University of Chicago Press. $2.50.*

SOCIAL and cultural crises destroy "community of belief," shattering public truth into "innumerable private truths [that are] mutually incommunicable." In such transitional periods, art cannot flourish. For, in the absence of commonly accepted norms, the selective significance and evaluation of subject matter become doubtful both to the artist and his unsettled public. In our own century, this situation has resulted in works of escape and experiments in technical ingenuities. To illustrate his point, Daiches selects six English novelists. Of these, Galsworthy still represents a kind of stable Victorianism. Conrad, according to the author, falls outside of the stream altogether. Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf forsake the objective world in which values have disintegrated, taking shelter in their "private" minds. Katherine Mansfield depends "on a personal sense of truth," and Virginia Woolf comes to terms with her time by "ignoring" its intellectual climate, replacing it by a personal scheme of values. Likewise, Aldous Huxley has fled into a "personal mysticism." James Joyce, finally, has retired from the world to contemplate it from an opposite focus. If the others view our time from a personal angle, Joyce attempts a universal approach that takes no sides, makes no judgments, essaying a kind of divine neutrality. For this lack of perspective, Joyce "compensates" by his technical genius.

Daiches' analysis of the individual novelists, especially of Joyce and Huxley, contains fresh insights particularly into the technical structure of their works. And his book illustrates some pertinent forms of modern dispersions. To be sure, he could not anticipate the original version presented by W. H. Auden in his review of Daiches' book in which Auden *welcomes* the atomization of society *as a basis for socialism.* Despite this at-home-in-secession consolation, Daiches' main point, that a time when the social base is split presents great difficulties to the artist, is obviously well taken. Yet one wishes that Daiches had passed on beyond this general and established proposition. Edmund Wilson used the lean formula of "private musings" to characterize the Symbolists in *Axel's Castle.* Daiches, I fear, falls into a similar groove in categorizing works as escapist and "personal." (Daiches seems, at times, to mean *individual* when he speaks of "personal.")

The limitation of such terms lies in that they cloud *the real and concrete relevance* art has to the civilization from which it cannot escape, and to the objective world which is the necessary chart for any personal graph. For we may well ask: Is the only alternative to public truth an utter disharmony of private truths? Even in a fluctuating period, such as ours, is it not possible to have an organic philosophy that points beyond the oscillations, that may be said to be "public" in that it represents the real and final interests of the public? Indeed, transitional eras can even be favorable for the creation of such dramatic or dialectic fusions, as the examples of Plato, Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe show. Daiches' one-way concept of "representation" encases him within a sterile dilemma. On the one hand, he holds that restive epochs, lacking a community of belief, cannot produce healthy art; and on the other hand, that art can flourish only when it is "the natural reflex of the existing state of culture." Because the proletarian novel is not this natural reflex, but "a deliberate attempt to point forward to a new one . . . [it is] not particularly good literature."

The group of English novelists which Daiches has selected does not encompass "the modern world," but (with the possible exception of Conrad) illustrates only its dissociative flux. From the point of view of organic vitality and futuristic vision, the modern scene (and even England) offers another type of representation, embodied in such writers as Nexo, Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Steinbeck, and Sholokoff, a representation of communality born out of the same uprootedness. Mr. Daiches himself is not altogether unaware of this fact.

At one point, the author suggests that Marxism provides the hope for "some kind of reintegration on a higher level." In this sense, his book is a kind of initial groping towards Marxist categories. Specific consideration of Marxist writing could have given content to the promise he sees in it.

HARRY SLOCHOWER.

Puppet World

MEN IN CHAINS, *by Thomas Ryan. Random House. $2.50.*

THE twelve stories in this book have all the ingredients necessary for exciting drama: there is blood and thunder, violent death, insanity, the strong breath of the macabre. But the one dominant theme (the chains which bind the soul of man to his fate) is mystic and mechanistic at best, and often just plain empty and pretentious. Therefore the stories remain constantly dissatisfying. The world of Thomas Ryan is a puppet world, spinning about in a dark and terrible night, a night without meaning or hope or end; and each puppet, great or insignificant, is gripped in the talons of a blind and gruesome destiny.

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Sunday, February 11, JOHN MORISON, Town Hall, 150 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, Penna, 8:15 P.M. Auspices Philadelphia Workers School. Topic: PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUE — HOW TO READ YOUR DAILY NEWSPAPER.

Sunday, February 11, JOSEPH STAROBIN, Sunnyside Progressive School, 4342 47th Street, Sunnyside, Long Island, N. Y. Directions: BMT or IRT to Flushing—off at Bliss Street, 8:00 P.M. Topic: AMERICA PREPARES FOR WAR.

Sunday, February 11, GENERAL VICTOR A. YAKHONTOFF, Flatbush Marxist Forum, 1112 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn, New York, 8:00 P.M. Topic: THE FAR EASTERN ASPECTS OF THE WORLD SITUATION.

Friday, February 16, JOSEPH NORTH, 2nd Floor, 224 West Front Street, Plainfield, New Jersey. Ausp. I W O. Topic: PRESENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION.

Friday, February 16, GENERAL VICTOR A. YAKHONTOFF, Progressive Forum, 430 Sixth Avenue, N. Y. C., 8:15 P.M. Topic: THE FAR EASTERN ASPECTS OF THE WORLD SITUATION.

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a thief in Alexandria, 400 B.C.; the revolt of the slaves in Italy under the leadership of Spartacus, 73-71 B.C. This is how a story, capable of poignancy and hope, is treated here: Spartacus, as defeat and death appear inevitable, muses upon the causes of the failure of the slave revolt. After considering all factors, he decides that the villain in the case was neither the wily politician, the false friend of the masses, nor the masses themselves "who did not know how to be free," nor the action of the wealthy classes. Rather, the true villain was "the Power that created men." God caused all the misery on earth. In this manner and by such reasoning effective characters and situations in the other stories evaporate into thick fog.

The last story in the book, placed in the far future, depicts the end of the world by fire. The book ends on this note: "What was the use of making man? All that pother for nothing! A devilish joke to play on us after all the trouble we took! Or was it? What do we know?" It is because of this sophomoric and inconsequential philosophy and the lack of true understanding which its belief implies that these stories fail.

ALFRED J. BRENNER.

Fifty Years of the UMWA

COAL AND UNIONISM, *by David J. McDonald and Edward A. Lynch. Lynald Books, Silver Springs, Md. $2.50.*

ORGANIZED labor in America has found little time to reflect on its own past. Its record shifts from the smoky routines of convention halls to strikes. Its heroes, for want of accurate detail, evaporate into legend. Neither the IWW nor the Knights of Labor left us any monumental works on their objectives and how they undertook to gain them.

One therefore welcomes this history covering fifty years of the United Mine Workers of America, which has just held its Golden Jubilee convention at Columbus, Ohio. To boil down a half-century of events that have the highest significance for American labor to slightly over two hundred pages would be a superhuman feat. The writers have confined themselves largely to noting the chronological red-letter days of UMWA history. Their work is for the most part a record of the decisions made in convention halls and carried out with great difficulty and determination. The influence of the rank and file on policy is only remotely suggested. History is shown as a conduct of policies laid down by strong leaders. The authors appear to subscribe wholeheartedly to Carlyle's great-men theory and there is much uncritical praise of certain UMWA leaders.

The book also suffers from faulty proofreading and solecism. But these defects will not weigh too heavily against the intrinsic value of the volume, which is, for all its shortcomings, a welcome addition to our all-too-scant reservoirs of authentic information about the American labor movement.

ED FALKOWSKI.

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The First War Film

"The Fighting 69th," Warner Bros. movie, is outright war propaganda. A "mess of bilge and militarism."

COMING out of the projection room after seeing *The Fighting 69th,* one critic whistled in surprise and said, "What year is this?"

"I'd say about August 1917," said another.

James Cagney's new vehicle is a bold piece of warmongering, presenting the exploits of the 69th New York of the Rainbow Division of the AEF as though the First Imperialist War was a very noble little business. The derisive language used on the Germans—"krauts," "heinies," etc.—and the rank glorification of the 69th smell exactly like the crude jingo films used to whip up the populace in 1917. The picture omits none of the classic nose paint and eyeshadow employed by the boss class in painting up its wars. Father Duffy, chaplain of the 69th, is played by Pat O'Brien as though heaven were gaping to carry him away the moment he was done with the last take. The sweet Holy Roman incense completely obscures the rotting odor of the dead, and the troops are properly confessed and piously dispatched.

A covert attack on non-believers, Protestants, and Jews accompanies the business. One obviously Jewish member of the regiment, nicknamed "Mike Murphy" for his oddity, asks Father Duffy for the Catholic sacrament as he is dying. The padre magnanimously says a few Hebrew words.

Cagney plays a tough, atheistic Irishman who resists the consolation of the church, and subsequently is proved a coward for his non-reliance on the heavenly vapors. The patient priest defends him against the others despite Cagney's rebuffs, and finally the Man of God is repaid by Cagney's conversion and consequent heroic death in battle. Does the Catholic Church really mean to undertake the responsibility for the First World War? Joe Breen should be warned this is a bad tactic. The American people are under the impression that the war was a brutal frameup.

There is a laughably stupid sequence of Joyce Kilmer composing aloud as he plods through the mud on a march. Evoking bad verse as well as religious ritual is a new gimmick for perfuming imperialist war.

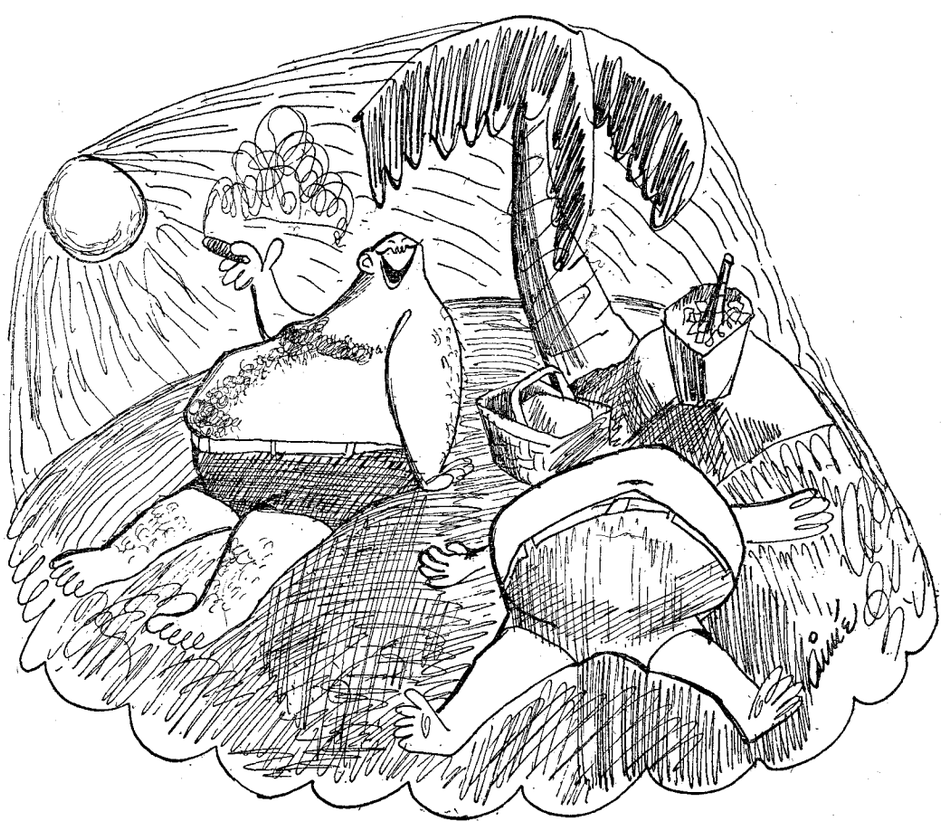
Pomposity and banality are inevitable in reactionary propaganda films, and I am happy to state that if any Cagney film can fail on entertainment value, *The Fighting 69th* is that picture. It is an unbelievable mess of bilge and militarism.

The right seems to me to be over-eager to stack the cannon fodder. There is an air of indecent and even nervous haste to get going. First the Herbie Hoover Finnish relief swindle, the lunatic fabrications of the press, and now good old Warner Bros. attempting to sell the new model on the performance record of the old. Well, well, boys, you should have begun with a big campaign in the Hearst press on the glories of the last massacre, in order to soften the folks up for the raw stuff of *The Fighting 69th.* The public isn't ready. Your film is too visionary.

The characterization of Father Duffy follows the stereotyped padre established by Spencer Tracy—the rough-and-ready man of the cloth, at home in the cloister or the neighborhood fight club. Protestant clergymen in the films do not have these enviable qualities; there is something of Gene Tunney as well as St. Thomas Aquinas in the curricula of Roman seminaries. Indeed, Hollywood seems to have acquired a state religion in this fondness for Joe Breen's faith. It's about time the labor movement put a man out in Hollywood to represent them in the same fashion that Mr. Breen checks the scripts for the Catholic Church.

Not the least offensive of the British empire's assaults on American neutrality is the film *The Lion Has Wings,* now showing on Broadway. This is the picture, mentioned before in these columns, which was made "cooperatively" by the studio workers, and which has turned out to be quite a money maker for the producer, Alexander Korda. Its glorification of the Royal Air Force is quite clumsy and the propaganda is the normal British hypocrisy about "democracy," etc. Lowell Thomas furnishes a breathless commentary and also a pretty puzzle in ethics. Here is one of our leading news broadcasters hiring himself out to the British propaganda bureau and no one seems to mind. Any effectiveness the picture has is due to Mr. Thomas' loyalty and willingness to serve. Let the Federal Bureau of Investigation check up on whether Mr. Thomas is properly registered with the State Department as a foreign agent.

War propaganda in the movies is the subject of an exceedingly valuable 50-cent pamphlet published by Cooperative Books at Norman, Okla. Winifred Johnston, author of *Memo on the Movies; War Propaganda 1914-1939,* served with George Creel's Committee on Public Information during the first imperialist war and she exposes a healthy slice of the chicancery of the intellectuals at the time. Her study of the movies is superbly documented down to the beginning of the Finnish affair; she warns that Finland is very likely the Bel-



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gium of the new world war. Of special interest is Miss Johnston's fair attitude toward the USSR and her understanding of the monopoly and imperialist nature of the film. *Memo on the Movies* is the most thorough piece of work on the subject of the movies as warmaker.

JAMES DUGAN.

"Geneva"

Bernard Shaw's play about the League of Nations.

WHEN a man is eighty-three years old and has written over fifty plays that have had a wider influence on our theater than the work of any other international playwright, he may be forgiven for petering out. In *Geneva,* currently at Henry Miller's Theater (but probably not for long), the old master nods; it is his privilege.

It is true that Shaw still has a pithy remark or so left in him; he has many pertinent things to say about the nature and the course of British imperialist policy; the activities and the aims of the current fascist dictators, Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco; the hopelessness of international "cooperation" under the present setup, and the hypocrisy of the pretended democracies. But in this work, originally written in 1938, these amusing cracks seem less amusing than they are, for they are embodied in a work that displays none of the old man's wonted dramaturgic skill. The whole is static, motionless, largely dull.

Miss Begonia Brown, the dimwitted secretary of the International Committee for Intellectual Cooperation at Geneva, is induced by sundry petitioners—a Jew, a common citizen, a widow—to indict and hale before the international court of the Hague sundry dictators named Ernest Battler, Bombardone, and Gen. Flanco de Fortinbras, on charges of murder, robbery, suppression of human liberty and democratic rights.

There is no certainty that they will appear, for the court has no jurisdiction, but as the judge says, all these gentlemen have frequently done things which were not required of them; they appear.

Then ensues a potpourri of charges and counter-charges, speeches and bombast from said Battler, Bombardone, and Flanco, in which their respective ideologies are set forth and their mutual interdependence examined. Here Mr. Shaw, who is a perennial thorn in the side of English complacency and double-dealing, gets in his best cracks at British expense. He makes it plain, through the speeches of Sir Orpheus Midlander, the British foreign secretary, that England would not hesitate to make a deal with either or all of these gents at any time, the circumstances being favorable.

The whole performance is slow and usually dull, as befits a heavy-handed satire on world-prominent figures, each of whom is given his brief moment in the spotlight to set forth some of Mr. Shaw's less incisive thinking

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CLARENCE HATHAWAY, Editor of Daily Worker, speaks on **THE FINNISH SITUATION TO DATE** this **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10,** 2:45 P.M., at Irving Plaza, Irving Place and 15 Street. Admision 25c. Auspices: Workers School.

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(dramatic thinking). There are amusing caricatures by Maurice Colbourne (Battler), Lawrence Hanray (Sir Orpheus), Earle Grey (Commissar Posky of the USSR), Barry Jones (judge of the International Court at the Hague), T. Renaud Lockwood as a bishop of the Church of England, and Norah Howard as Begonia. ALVAH BESSIE.

New Recordings

An album of Earl Robinson's folk ballads. Popular records.

TIMELY RECORDS, that enterprising and fastidious watchdog of neglected music, has just issued a four-record album of the songs of Earl Robinson, called *Songs for Americans*. The records are two sides of "Abe Lincoln," and single sides of "John Brown," "Horace Greeley," "John Henry," "Jesse James," "Joe Hill," and "The Grey Goose." Mr. Robinson himself is the singer; his own guitar, and sometimes his own American People's Chorus, are the accompanists. Here is a bonanza of songs of democracy, sung in a pleasant, friendly, and colloquial vein, a gem of recorded music. Leo Waldman of Timely has recorded them with high technical proficiency.

Blue Note pays its tribute to the Kansas City jazz pianist, Pete Johnson, in four twelve-inch sides of boogie-woogie and blues. Pete's two solos, "Barrelhouse Breakdown" and "Kansas City Farewell," and his work with Ulysses Livingston, guitar, and Abe Bolar, bass, on two trio sides, surpass anything he has done before on records.

Art Hodes, a slender, pale young man with a big zest for the piano, has won himself an enviable distinction as the only white boogie-woogie piano player. After seeing the broad backs of Ammons or Johnson bearing down on the instrument, the vigorous playing of slight Art Hodes is a surprise. Dan Qualey of Solo Art presents two Hodes solos in "Ross Tavern Boogie" and "South Side Shuffle." Hodes has a distinct style and a fine sense of structure; his boogie-woogie has wide variety within the form. For example, he uses the bass figure made famous by Jimmy Yancey and Meade "Lux" Lewis, and his individual treatment makes something else out of it.

Yancey himself was found by Mr. Qualey in Chicago, where the old master is now retired from music and working as a groundskeeper in the White Sox ball park. Induced to unlimber his fingers, Yancey recorded two important solos. "Jimmy's Stuff" turns out to be a blues version of Lewis' "Yancey Special." Jimmy Yancey plays with great dignity, and it is hard to believe that he has never had a lesson and for the last decade has played only about twice a month. He is so unsophisticated he has never learned to provide logical endings to his pieces. They come hurtling along and suddenly, bang, they've stopped. J. S. BIXLER.

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12. The Tsar's Bride, Rimsky-Korsakov
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15. Of krala i do krala
16. Strolling Home
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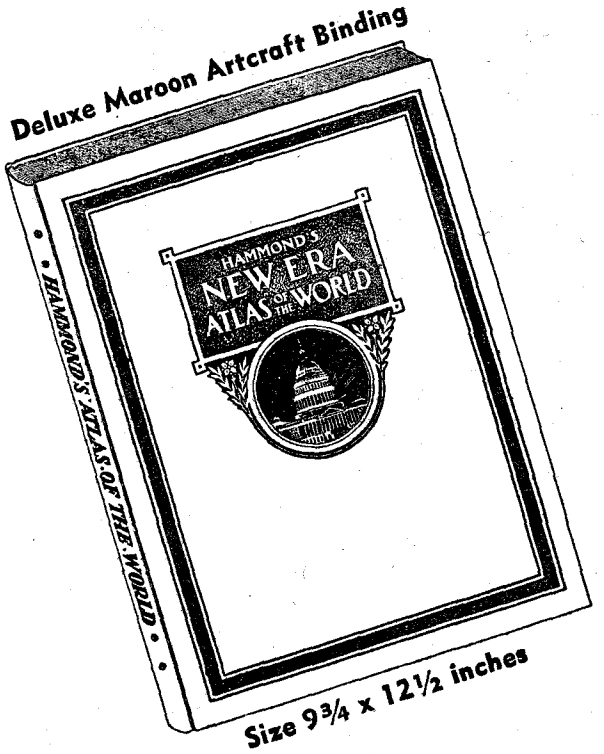

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